

Charlotte Mint Gold Coins, 1838-1861

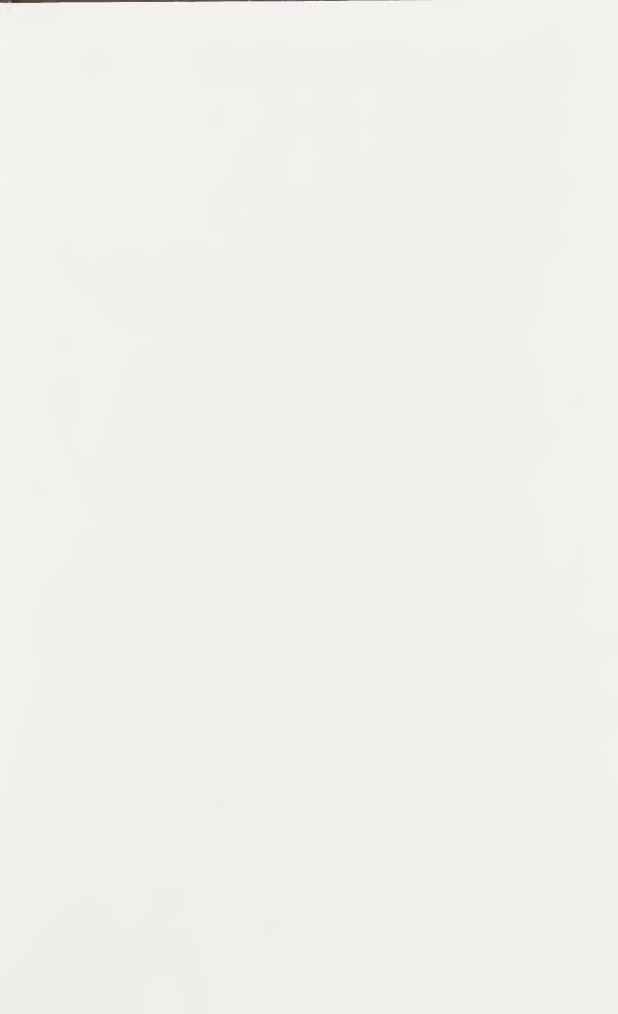
A Numismatic History and Analysis

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by Douglas Winter



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DEDICATED TO

*A.W. Lewin who taught me the value
of the printed word and the importance of
clear expression.*

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Preface

My interest in the coinage of the Charlotte Mint dates back to the mid-1970s. Although my then-meager budget would not allow for the purchase of more than a handful of gold coins, I began carefully to research the various dates and denominations which constituted the Charlotte series.

I quickly became frustrated by the lack of available reference material on United States gold coins. There were some works of value but many of my questions remained unanswered. My frustration came to a head in 1981 when I began to research and catalogue on a full-time basis. It was then that I decided that I would fill what was, to me, a glaring void in the annals of American numismatic research. I decided, initially, to concentrate on my favorite area: the coinage of the Charlotte Mint.

The intent of this book is to provide the collector and the professional numismatist with a comprehensive and interesting source of information. Instead of focusing on the history of the Charlotte Mint (a fascinating subject in its own right) I have placed my emphasis on the coins themselves. Hopefully, this orientation will increase the usefulness of this work.

For every specific issue I have included information about strike, surface texture, significant varieties, diagnostic criteria, etc. This information is complemented by rarity and Condition Census findings.

My rarity research is divided into two primary groups: rarity by date and overall rarity by grade. The findings are based mostly on auction records from 1945 to the present. These have been supplemented by my personal observations and the observations of a number of specialists and/or professionals.

I do not expect my findings on rarity to be 100% accurate as I did not, of course, have access to all of the known Charlotte coins. These rarity figures will be of most value when they are used comparatively (i.e., to determine the rarity of a particular date by measuring it against the rarity of another date), and when they are used to calculate arithmetic/geometric levels of rarity (i.e., to determine how rare an issue is in ascending grades and in specific conditions). While I expect the overall population figures for each date to be on the conservative side, I am fairly confident that the in-grade rarity distribution will remain constant (i.e., if the total number known of a specific date is found to be, say, 35% too low, the number of Very Fine coins and the number of "Almost Uncirculated" coins will remain proportionate).

My use of the term "Condition Census" refers to the five finest known coins for each date. "Finest Known," in this case, means those coins which are known to myself or to a reliable source. There are, no doubt, a number of potential Condition Census pieces which are, at present, hidden in old collections or which are residing in non-collector accumulations. By its very nature, a Condition Census is ephemeral. The publication of this book should provide an impetus to update and expand this research.

The coinage of the Charlotte Mint has, for too long a time, been unfairly neglected by numismatic researchers. It is my sincere hope that this book will generate new interest and support among dealers and collectors.

A Brief History of the Charlotte Mint

Despite appearing entirely unrelated, a number of events were responsible for the creation of a United States branch mint at Charlotte, North Carolina.

The first and possibly most significant of these events involved an important change in the United States economic system and related economic theory. A flurry of legislation, which culminated in the passage of the Act of 1834, placed the country, in essence, on a *de facto* gold standard. As a result of changing the legal ratio of silver to gold from 15:1 (i.e., one ounce of gold was equivalent in value to 15 ounces of silver) to 16:1, gold coins became, almost immediately, a circulating medium. Conversely, silver coins all but disappeared with the same alacrity. The impact of the Act of 1834 is best explained, however, by an analysis of the events which led up to its passage.

The original ratio of 15:1 was established by Alexander Hamilton and was included in the Mint Act of 1792. It soon became obvious that the United States had greatly undervalued gold in relation to European rates. As the value of gold steadily rose on the world markets of the early 19th century, the United States was forced to place gold in a secondary position to silver. The United States Mint, which was plagued by internal woes and which was chronically under-funded, was unable to meet the domestic demand for circulating silver coinage. This situation was compounded by a booming export trade in American silver coins. Speculators discovered that they could reap ample profits by exporting American silver coins for recoinage in Mexico, Spain, and other locations.

By about 1815 this problem had reached a crisis stage. All precious metals had, in turn, been affected. Due to the circumstances described above, gold coins were entirely out of circulation. Silver coins were, as well, almost out of circulation. Bullion was in short supply from foreign sources due to the undervaluation of gold. Domestic bullion sources remained unexploited due to the lethargic state of the economy coupled with the Mint's inability to coin circulating small silver without losing money in the process. The only coins which could be readily found in circulation were the copper half cents and cents, both of which were unpopular with the public. As a result, the United States economy became almost totally dependent on a shaky and dangerous combination of Spanish silver and state bank notes.

By the early 1820s, Congress saw the urgent need to formulate a new ratio which would rationalize the ratios between both gold and silver, as well as the American and European standards of value. It was not until 1830 to 1831, however, that concrete solutions were offered. A proposal made by the Senate Finance Committee in 1830 called for limitations on silver coins so as to force the use of gold coins in large transactions. This proposal was rejected. A proposal made by the same group later in the year called for the establishment of a new standard at the ratio of 15.62 $\frac{1}{2}$:1. The debate was to continue, unresolved, for nearly four years.

On February 19, 1834 a new bill was introduced. It retained the 15.62½:1 ratio; proposed that subsidiary gold and silver coins be made receivable for government dues; and fixed the ratio for silver and gold at 1:10. While worthy of praise for its subsidiary silver provisions, the proposal for a subsidiary gold coinage could have severely damaged the already frail American economy.¹

Immediately before the bill was scheduled for its final reading it was suddenly withdrawn by its sponsor, Rep. Campbell P. White of New York. Rep. White, the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, then introduced a new bill which bore little resemblance to the old one. The new bill had only two major provisions. One of these changed the ratio of silver to gold to 16:1; this, in turn, reduced the weight of the standard gold dollar from 24.75 grains fine to 23.2. Despite considerable bipartisan opposition, the bill was pushed through both houses and was signed into law on June 28, 1834.

It is, even today, difficult to pinpoint the exact reasons for Rep. White's sudden actions and the changes he brought with them. A possible explanation is that the combined lobbying of Eastern businessmen (who wanted gold restored to circulation so as to improve their position in foreign trade) and Southern mining concerns (who wished to create, simultaneously, a strong and ready-made market for the newly-discovered gold supplies of the Carolinas and Georgia) persuaded Rep. White to rewrite the bill in their own interests.

The Act of 1834 raised the coining value of one troy pound of gold from \$232.72 (based on the old standard of the Act of 1792) to \$248.54. Viewed historically, the Act of 1834 represented the first time that the United States Congress had employed fiat economic practices—i.e., creating monetary value by the force of statute law. The Act of 1834, was, thus, a victory for gold over silver. The repercussions of this victory were both numerous and significant.

Just as the Act of 1792 had undervalued silver, the Act of 1834 undervalued gold. A classic example of Gresham's Law would soon unfold. As two coins of the same denomination but of different intrinsic values circulated simultaneously, the one with the lesser intrinsic value would circulate while the other coin would be withdrawn due to its greater market value. The stated intention of the Act of 1834 was to devalue gold so it would freely circulate with silver. The actual effect of the new legislation made, instead, silver coins vanish from circulation in huge quantities. Silver coinage was, in turn, discouraged by the lack of legislative provisions for a subsidiary silver coinage. Old tenor gold coins, which had lain in bank vaults for years, were suddenly rushed to the Mint for recoinage. (These coins now contained an intrinsic value of \$1.05 per dollar.) A secondary effect of the wholesale meltings of old tenor gold coins in 1834 and 1835 was the almost total disappearance of certain dates. In the coming decades, these issues were to become great numismatic rarities. The supply of gold was bolstered by an influx of coins shipped from Europe as trade payments. Domestic gold, the majority of which had previously been exported, was now shipped to the Mint. From 1825 to

1834 the average annual gold coinage of the Mint was about \$400,000 and none of this had entered circulation. During the final six months of 1834 alone, gold coinage amounted to \$4 million and all of this entered circulation.

The southern gold interests were suddenly faced with a lucrative group of prospects. The demand for their gold had, almost overnight, greatly increased. The Mint at Philadelphia, until recently an insignificant factor on the southern economy, was suddenly transformed into an insatiable consumer of southern gold. By a happy coincidence, production figures at the North Carolina and Georgia gold fields had reached record levels by the early 1830s. The South could now calculate an important equation: gold was money and money was power. The southern miners immediately assumed a new position of importance and gained quick admission to the inner sanctums of Washington. They could now demand the branch mints which they had long craved but which, until now, seemed a remote possibility. This procession of events is, however, running a bit ahead of our story. We must now go back 30 odd years and briefly trace the evolution of the great gold discoveries in North Carolina.

Significant quantities of gold were first discovered in the Mecklenberg County area of North Carolina in the late 1790s. Legitimate mining operations began in the mid-1820s. By 1829, the first American gold rush had engulfed the western Piedmonts. Along with the ore came a new set of demographics. A wave of people with their towns and their industries gave North Carolina its first real taste of economic viability.

In 1829 North Carolina was a very remote part of the United States. The lack of an official refining facility caused the miners untold hardships. To sell their gold meant a number of unenviable options. They could travel to Philadelphia on horseback if they dared to risk the numerous bandits who lurked along the way. Or they could sell their gold to the local banks and merchants who were notorious for their unfavorable offers.

Local politicians, led by Gideon Glenn, went to Washington and Philadelphia with the hope of convincing officials of the dire need for a reputable refining facility. Their efforts, however, ended in failure. The disappointed miners' solutions were to export their gold to Europe or to make the best of the dismal domestic refining situation.

The best solution for the North Carolina miners arrived in the form of a German immigrant named Christopher Bechtler. In 1831 he opened a private mint in Rutherfordton. Bechtler's choice of location proved to be ideal. He was easily accessible by the newly-opened Georgia mines. Most importantly, Rutherfordton was heavily populated with other German immigrants.

At first the miners were skeptical. They, no doubt, recalled the escapades of Templeton Reid and his ill-fated Milledgeville, Georgia private mint. (An assay of some of Reid's coins had shown them to be greatly undervalued. Subsequently, Reid's endeavor was destroyed by public distrust. For more detailed information on Reid, refer to Dexter C. Seymour's excellent work "Temple-

ton Reid, First of the Pioneer Coiners" in *American Numismatic Society Museum Notes* 19, 1974.)

Bechtler was an exceptional businessman and he took great pains to convince the local miners of his integrity and honesty. His coins were assayed and found to be of the highest purity. He was praised by the local press and this, in turn, inspired confidence in the mines and the towns alike. The Bechtler mint was soon a great success. "His brilliant reputation and the deplorable currency situation made Bechtler gold coins the standard currency in western North Carolina for a number of years." From January 1831 to December 1835 the Bechtler mint struck over \$800,000 worth of gold coins.

The North Carolina mines continued to increase their output through the early years of the 1830s. In 1834 alone the output of gold mined in all of the southern Appalachian states was estimated at \$900,000. The success of the Bechtler mint soon interested the officials of the Philadelphia Mint and they sought to gain entry into the lucrative market. The desire—and the need—to compete with Bechtler certainly served as an impetus for these officials to provide branch mints in the South.

The economic importance of the southern mines, the success of the Bechtler mint, and the passage of the Act of 1834 coincided with uncannily good timing. When coupled with the increased domestic demand for gold bullion, the increased domestic production of gold in the South (with its accompanying prestige and political clout), and the end of resistance by Mint officials, the establishment of a United States branch mint at Charlotte became a certainty by 1835.

After Gideon Glenn's unsuccessful efforts, North Carolina dispatched Rep. Samuel Carson to Washington with the intent of introducing legislation to establish a United States branch mint. His efforts were initially stymied by a number of political complications, including the zealous regionalism of his own constituency. After long and animated debates within the North Carolina State Legislature, Charlotte was chosen as the site for a proposed mint. Rep. Carson was replaced in 1833 by Rep. James Graham. Rep. Graham immediately joined forces with the representatives from the other gold-producing southern states. This bloc provided Rep. Graham with far more power (and eventual success) than his predecessors had. A bill dated April 4, 1834 and asking for the establishment of assay offices in North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Virginia, was narrowly defeated by Congress. The slim margin of defeat encouraged the branch mint advocates and Rep. Graham made a bid for a North Carolina facility on December 15, 1834 before the House Ways and Means Committee. Mint Director Samuel Moore was asked to prepare a report which was submitted on January 15, 1835. In this report, Moore advocated the establishment of branch mints. The Mint director was well-regarded by his Congressional peers and a new bill, revised to Moore's specifications, was read before the Senate on February 10, 1835. After much debate and revision, the bill was passed by a margin of 24-19 on March 3, 1835.

The Act of March 3, 1835 served to establish United States branch mints in Charlotte, Dahlonega (Georgia), and New Orleans. The Charlotte facility was to strike only gold coins and was appropriated a sum of \$50,000 with which to purchase a site, erect a building, and to obtain the necessary machinery. Additional funding was provided for the hiring of mint personnel.

Samuel McComb, a resident of Charlotte and a one-time state representative, was awarded the post of commissioner. His duties included selection of the mint site, contracting for the erection of the mint building and the purchasing of needed materials. McComb bought a four-acre site and named William Strickland as the architect. Strickland, best known for his design of the second United States Mint in 1829, submitted his plans and cost estimates in July 1835. The building was scheduled for completion in January 1837 and was to be executed in the Greek Revival style. (For more information on Strickland and the building of the Charlotte Mint, see Henrietta Wilkinson's *The Mint Museum of Art at Charlotte—A Brief History*. Charlotte, NC, 1973.)

In October 1835 the contract for materials was awarded to the Raleigh firm of Perry and Ligon at a cost of \$29,800. An additional \$22,150 in expenses were incurred, primarily for coining and assay materials.

The officers of the mint were John H. Wheeler (superintendent and acting treasurer), John H. Gibbon (assayer, melter, and refiner), John R. Bolton (chief clerk), and William F. Strange (clerk).

Mint operations began on December 4, 1837. The first coins (half eagles) were struck on March 28, 1838. Until the suspension of operations on May 20, 1861, the total value of coinage struck at the Charlotte Mint was \$90,163,660. Coinage was halted in July 28, 1844 after a fire destroyed the building. The blaze was ignited by a burglar who had plundered the mint on the previous evening. A new edifice was authorized by the Act of March 3, 1845; this was completed and occupied in early 1846.

In April 1861 North Carolina Governor John W. Ellis ordered Colonel J.Y. Bragg to seize the mint for the state of North Carolina. This was accomplished without incident and the mint continued to operate for the next few weeks (striking half eagles) as the mint of North Carolina, until the secession of the state on May 20, 1861. Coinage was suspended and was not resumed again after the ending of the war.

During the Civil War, the Charlotte Mint served as the headquarters for a regiment of Confederate troops. It was also used by the citizens of Charlotte as a facility for parties and important social gatherings. At the conclusion of the war, the building was used only as an assay office which produced ingots which were then sent to Philadelphia.

One last attempt to have the branch mint restored to its function as a permanent center for coinage was made by the General Assembly of North Carolina in February 1873. A resolution was passed and submitted to Congress saying that the mines were still producing gold and that the need for the mint still existed. The government, however, was preparing legislation to the con-

rary. The assay office continued until 1913, when the government ordered it closed permanently.

The Charlotte Mint was officially closed on July 31, 1913. It was unoccupied until 1917 when it became a meeting place for the Charlotte Womens' Club. In 1932 the nearby Post Office made plans to expand and, in the process, demolish the mint building. A local citizen's committee was formed and attempted to raise funds with which to move the building.

In 1933 the mint building was moved to a new site and chartered as the Mint Museum of Art. Work was completed in 1936 and on October 22 the official dedication took place.

Today, the museum houses a fine collection of paintings, sculpture, ceramics, books, and Charlotte gold coins. It is, as well, the embodiment of a complex and colorful chapter of American economic, political, social, and numismatic history.

Footnotes

Carothers, Neil. *Fractional Money*. (New York: John Wiley and sons, 1930) p. 80.

Ibid., p. 90.

Ibid.

Ibid., p. 92.

Ibid., p. 93.

Ibid.

Barfield, Rodney and Keith Strawn. *The Bechtlers and Their Coinage—North Carolina Mint Master of Pioneer Gold*. (Raleigh: North Carolina Museum of History, 1980) p. 7.

Ibid., p. 10.

Ibid., p. 11.

Wilkinson, Henrietta H. *The Mint Museum of Art at Charlotte: A Brief History*. (Charlotte: Heritage Printers, 1973) p. 18.

Ibid., p. 43.

Ibid., p. 40.

Collecting Branch Mint Gold Coins

United States gold coins have, since the earliest days of American numismatics, been avidly collected. The great early collectors—Lorin Parmelee, Joseph J. Mickley, and Matthew Stickney—all built extensive cabinets of fine gold coins.

These early collectors assembled their cabinets by date sequence. They had little regard for mintmarks and sought only one coin of each specific date or type. As a result, very few high-grade branch mint gold coins were preserved. Additionally, the rarity of many branch mint issues was unknown, and would remain so for many years.

Attention to branch mint gold coins began in 1893 with the publication of Augustus G. Heaton's *A Treatise on the Coinage of the United States Branch Mints*. This historically important work alerted collectors to the rarity and characteristics of branch mint coins of all metals.

In his work Heaton stated that:

The collection of the coinage of the branch mints of the United States, in addition to that of Philadelphia, will not only sustain interest in the nation's coinage as a whole, and especially in the issues of the last half century, but will be found worthy of the enthusiasm of both the young collector and the most advanced numismatist... As the premiums upon gold coins are relatively much lower than on any other, a collection of gold mintmarks would not be only a very interesting pursuit to the wealthy numismatist or to any prominent institution, but would prove neither extravagant nor unprofitable, for such a collection would be a distinguishing possession and, if bought prudently, would cost much closer to its cost than many miscellaneous collections of silver and copper which are thrown upon the market.

While interest in branch mint gold coins grew, the actual number of important collectors at the turn of the century was small. The primary reason for this was financial in nature, as the average middle class white male's salary was approximately \$10 to \$15 per week and the purchase of gold coins, particularly the larger denominations, was beyond the reach of most. Those who could afford to purchase gold coins were able to form unparalleled collections. Men such as Waldo Newcomer, John Clapp, H.O. Granberg, William Woodin, and Virgil Brand combined intelligent buying habits with a genuine commitment to research. Clapp and Woodin's unpublished research represents, even to this day, accurate information on the die varieties and rarity levels of gold coins.

In 1934 Wayne Raymond published his *Standard Catalogue of United States Coins*. This revolutionary work was the first annual catalogue to list and price all American coins by date and mintmark. Many collectors were, no doubt, motivated to form branch mint gold collections due to the Raymond catalogues.

The 1930s and 1940s were, in many ways, a "golden era" for branch mint collectors. Many important collections, such as those formed by Belden Roach,

Col. James Flanagan, F.C.C. Boyd, George Hall, and William Atwater, were sold at auction. Prices increased at a steady level and cataloguers paid special attention to new-found rarities.

The 1950s saw a level of numismatic scholarship and comradery which may never be duplicated. The New York firm of New Netherlands Rare Coins produced auction catalogues of unsurpassed depth and accuracy. The cataloguing team of Walter Breen and John J. Ford, Jr. was instrumental in establishing accurate rarity levels for many branch mint issues. The publication of R.S. Yeoman's *A Guide Book of United States Coins* exposed countless thousands of readers to numismatics and many of these individuals became dedicated collectors.

The 1960 to 1978 era saw the continued formation and dispersal of numerous high-quality collections of branch mint gold coins. Although these coins did not receive the attention accorded to such speculative areas as modern rolls or "investment quality" type coins and Proof sets, a quiet but dedicated cadre of collectors and dealers was established. These individuals were often friendly rivals who exchanged want lists, duplicate coins, and research. A few dealers, such as Mike Brownlee, Julian Leidman, and David Akers, became experts in their own rights and helped to form numerous important collections.

The boom market conditions of 1979 to 1980 affected branch mint gold coins just as they affected all facets of numismatics. High-quality examples of rare dates were suddenly sold to investors for stratospheric prices. Established collectors could no longer afford to purchase certain coins and their frustration turned to contempt.

After the boom had collapsed in 1981, many observers were surprised to see that branch mint gold price levels had fallen far less than, say, type coin prices had. The reason was obvious. A substantial number of sophisticated, dedicated, and wealthy collectors were pursuing an ever-dwindling number of coins. The publication of David Akers' works on gold coins had, as well, increased the number of serious collectors and armed them with considerable knowledge about rarity and pricing.

In October 1982 the Louis Eliasberg collection of United States Gold Coins was sold at auction by Bowers and Ruddy Galleries. Included in this landmark sale were a number of "finest known" and "Condition Census" branch mint issues. These coins were among the most actively pursued in the entire sale and many record prices were established.

At the present date, the collecting of branch mint gold coins continues to reach new levels of popularity and sophistication. Dahlenega and Carson City issues appear to be the most avidly collected series. Charlotte coins, while subject to near fanatical devotion by a few specialists, remain relatively overlooked and unappreciated. Thus, the opportunity to purchase "sleepers" is still possible. Very choice coins are, of course, infrequently offered but acceptable specimens (i.e., in the Very Fine to Extremely Fine range) can be purchased for reasonable levels.

The method by which Charlotte coins are collected differs with each in-

dividual. A good basic introduction to the series is the formation of a denominational type set. Consisting of only five coins (three gold dollars, a quarter eagle, and a half eagle), this set can be assembled with relative ease and manageable financial outlay. Some collectors attempt to form date sets for specific denominations. Others attempt to form complete sets with one example of every date/denomination issued by the Charlotte Mint. Variety collectors are, as one might presume, a rare commodity.

The ideal collection of Charlotte coins should include a representative sample of the three denominations. Instead of rushing to fill holes, the collector should carefully build a set of attractive, original pieces representing the finest quality for the specific price range which he or she can afford. Elusive or unusual offerings, i.e., a particular date in a higher grade than usually found, should be purchased unless the coin is unrealistically priced. And since the purchase of coins represents a considerable monetary investment, the factor of eventual resale must be considered. Damaged, harshly cleaned, repaired, or unattractive coins should be avoided unless they are extremely rare dates which are otherwise unobtainable.

Every serious coin collector has a favorite series or an area which is of particular interest. Branch mint gold collectors have the pleasure of continuing a tradition which is over 80 years old and whose past members include figures who stand out as luminaries of numismatic history.

Rarity Table

Number of Specimens	Level of Rarity
1-3	R-8
4-6	High R-7
7-9	Mid R-7
10-12	Low R-7
13-18	High R-6
19-24	Mid R-6
25-30	Low R-6
31-45	High R-5
46-60	Mid R-5
61-75	Low R-5
76 or more	R-4

How To Use This Book

The style and format of this book were deliberately chosen for their simplicity and congruence with other works on United States gold coins. It would be helpful to the reader if he studied this section before plunging into the specific issue listings themselves.

A) Outline of Types

At the beginning of each section in this book, there is an outline of the major types of gold dollars, quarter eagles, and half eagles. These outlines are provided for the type collector who desires to build a meaningful set of Charlotte coinage. Also included in these outlines are total mintage figures for each specific type. It may prove interesting for the collector to compare the total mintage figures for, say, Type II gold dollars with Type III gold dollars. It should be remembered that these mintage figures are primarily contextual in nature; comparing the figures for Type II gold dollars with Classic Head, Obverse Mintmark quarter eagles is like comparing apples and oranges.

B) Issues and Varieties

In this book, the term "issue" refers to a specific date, denomination, and design. An 1850-C gold dollar, thus, is an issue. The term "variety" refers to a minting peculiarity or characteristic which gives the quality of "uniqueness" to coins of similar denominations, types, or years. An 1849-C Open Wreath gold dollar, thus, is a variety.

C) Mintages

Mintage figures for all of the Charlotte issues are based on official Mint records. A few issues, notably the gold dollars, show variations in their published mintage figures. In such instances, I have chosen the figure which I feel is most accurate and which is most widely accepted among specialists. Mintage figures for certain varieties, such as the 1839/38 quarter eagle with 2nd Reverse, are based on delivery records and my personal research; they have been confirmed by such experts as Robert Julian and Walter Breen.

D) Rarity

Nearly everyone who is familiar with United States gold coins knows that Charlotte coins are rare. But just how rare are they? To answer this important question, I have attempted to establish the total number known for each issue, determine the overall rarity for each issue and provide a table of "in grade rarity" for each issue as well.

It is, of course, impossible in most instances to know the exact number of coins known for a specific issue or variety. Therefore, I have endeavored to establish a "range" which attempts to list an approximation of how many examples are known. This range is based on frequency of appearance at auction, population counts of specimens known to me held in estates, museums, and long-term collections, pieces I have examined at conventions and an approximation of the population not known to me. It is highly likely that my findings are conservative and that for each issue or variety the actual num-

ber of specimens known is considerably higher. Excluding the possibility of a hoard(s) swelling the population of any issue or variety, the number of total known specimens should remain fairly similar on a comparative basis; i.e., the 1855-C gold dollar will remain approximately 30% to 40% rarer overall than the 1859-C gold dollar (70 to 75 currently known for the former versus 100 to 110 currently known for the latter).

The "overall rarity" for each issue or variety is based on the "Rarity Table" (see pg. 14). This rarity scale is based on the system devised by Dr. William Sheldon. When a specific issue or variety has a total population range which crosses two levels of rarity I have listed the lower rarity first.

The concept of "in grade rarity" may not be familiar to some readers of this book: this means each issue or variety has a specific rarity rating for each grade. These ratings are not always geometric; the existence of a hoard might, for example, make MS-60 examples of a specific issue more plentiful than About Uncirculated examples. For every issue and significant variety I have broken down the total known population into a "by grade" distribution. These findings are based on my personal observations and those of a number of leading specialists and dealers.

E) Condition Census

The concept of "Condition Census" (again, developed by Dr. Sheldon) refers to a listing of the finest known examples for an issue or a variety. In this work, the Condition Census is limited to five coins. *The listings in this book represent the Condition Census for each issue or variety as I know them.* These include auction appearances of coins which I have seen or which were examined by specialists. Pedigree chains (i.e., records of ownership) have been constructed with the input of cataloguers, dealers, collectors, pictorial records, and my own notes and observations. *Each coin in the Condition Census has been graded according to current grading standards.* Each listing concludes with all those specimens which were catalogued at Condition Census level in older sales but which, in my opinion, would not be considered as such today.

F) Photographs

Each issue and variety has been photographed, to show the reader a representative example of the coin under discussion. The photographs have been enlarged two times life size.



Section **ONE**

Gold Dollars

I. Type One (Liberty Head, Small Planchet)

- a. Open Wreath, 1849 only
- b. Closed Wreath, 1849-1853

Total Mintage: 90,619

II. Type Two (Small Indian Head)

1855 only

Total Mintage: 9,803

III. Type Three (Large Indian Head)

1857 and 1859 only

Total Mintage: 18,515



Photos courtesy of Stack's, N.Y., N.Y

1849-C Open Wreath



Mintage: Included In 1849-C Closed Wreath

General Information:

This is the rarest gold dollar, the rarest coin struck at the Charlotte Mint and among the rarest of all United States gold coins. The Open Wreath reverse differs significantly from the Closed Wreath reverse: on the former, the left end of the wreath extends to a point below the first T in STATES, while the right end of the wreath extends to a point below the far side of the F in OF. The 1849-C Open Wreath possesses a number of quickly recognizable diagnostic features. The star which is opposite the tip of Ms. Liberty's nose has an unusually short right point. The leaf below the 1 of the date is hollow, the leaf tip below the 9 is partly detached, and the ribbons are incomplete due to die lapping. A tiny die file mark is visible above the RI in AMERICA. It is unknown how many were struck, but we can presume that the number was extremely small. The discovery of the 1849-C Open Wreath is credited to Waldo Newcomer who located an example some time before 1933. At present, four pieces are known.

Rarity:

Total known: 4

Overall Rarity: High R-7

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
R-8	R-8	R-8	---
(2)	(1)	(1)	

Condition Census:

- (1) New Netherlands Coin Company purchased privately, resold to a prominent specialist. AU-50.
- (2) Newcomer; Roach: 1083; Charles Williams; Robert Schermerhorn; 1956 ANA: 1571; unknown collector; Midwestern collector; Auction 79: 749 (at \$90,000); unknown collector; NERCA (1/82): 1350. This coin has been variously graded EF, AU, and Mint State. It is identifiable by a small lintmark near the ear. We graded it EF-45 when we viewed it in 1979.
- (3) New England Rare Coin Galleries, private sale 1979 (by a Massachusetts dealer) to a Delaware collector for approximately \$65,000. The coin was said to grade VF-35 or so.
- (4) McReynolds (before 1956); Leo Young; Charles Southwick; Pine Tree (GENA, 1974): 1952 at \$35,000; North Carolina collector; Stack's (5/2/86): 1330. Very Fine but scratched and showing a mounting remnant on the right side of the wreath. Illustrated in the Pine Tree auction cited above, as well as in the Stack's 1986 sale.

Notes:

1849-C Closed Wreath



Mintage: 11,639

General Information:

While overshadowed by its Open Wreath counterpart, the 1849-C Closed Wreath gold dollar is a rare coin in its own right. The typical specimen is somewhat weakly struck on the leaves, upper obverse and lower reverse border beads, and the upper hair strands. Many have a semiprooflike obverse and exhibit deep yellow or greenish yellow coloration. A peculiar characteristic of this date is the convexity of its obverse field. This tends to accentuate wear and/or marks. For numismatists, this convexity makes the 1849-C Closed Wreath a most difficult coin to grade. Accurate grading should be based on the amount of obverse lustre which is present and an emphasis on the reverse. The Closed Wreath reverse has its left wreath end below the left side of the second T in STATES. The right wreath end extends to a point just beyond the left side of the O in OF. No significant die varieties are known; the reverse has a small C as on the 1850 and 1851. The 1849-C Closed Wreath gold dollar is very rare in AU or better and is of nearly similar rarity to the more highly regarded 1850-C.

Rarity:

Total Known: 75-80

Overall Rarity: High R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
High R-5 (42-43)	Mid R-6 (22-23)	Mid R-7 (7-8)	High R-7 (4-6)

Condition Census:

- (1) Dr. Alfred Globus Collection, ex Kagin (7/74): 1327, possibly ex Atwater: 2141 or Bell I: 45. MS-65. A Gem which sold for a remarkable \$2,775 in 1974.
- (2) NASCA (12/76): 565, ex Paramount via private treaty sale in 1974, possibly ex Gaylord: 4. MS-60 or better. Prooflike and very sharply struck; removed from an MS-63 grade by the presence of a few obverse contact marks.
- (3) Bareford: 7, ex H.R. Lee: 941. MS-60 or better with pale yellow-orange toning. Identifiable by a patch of deeper toning in the left obverse field.
- (4) Miles: 3. MS-60. In the catalogue description for No. 2, this coin was described as Mint State.
- (5) Stack's (2/74): 449. Better than MS-60 but, unfortunately, with a large scrape before the face. Accordingly, I grade this coin "AU-55 or better."

The finest AUs appear to be Jay: 186; Auction 81: 1315; and Eliasberg: 3, ex Clapp and Rawson; and Hewitt (B&M 1984): 2638. The other AUs are not especially choice.

Silver

1850-C



Mintage: 6,966

General Information:

The 1850-C has the second lowest mintage of any Charlotte Mint gold dollar (not including the 1849-C Open Wreath). Its strike is usually quite weak. The borders on the obverse and the reverse never show full beading. The hair and wreath are often blurry. Some are struck on granular planchets (Scanlon: 1918; Miles: 7, and others); many display conspicuous planchet defects. Specimens are known with roughness below the bust (AUCTION 81: 1319, and others). This was caused by some foreign matter adhering to the die. The 1850-C gold dollar is an habitually overgraded coin. There are at least 17 recorded appearances of "Uncirculated" coins sold at auction between 1944 and 1986. Most of these, however, can be discounted. Varieties are known with heavy and light dates. A few show a large "comet-like" obverse die break from the left side of the star at 4:00 to the border (Eliasberg: 7). The 1850-C has long been regarded as a rarity. B. Max Mehl devoted an unusually large description to an example in his Atwater Sale (Lot 2142), where he enthusiastically traced its price history from the late 1920s to the late 1940s. While slightly overrated in lower grades, this date is a legitimate rarity in full AU or Uncirculated.

Rarity:

Total Known: 70-75

Overall Rarity: Low R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
High R-5 (39-40)	Mid R-6 (20-21)	Mid R-7 (7-9)	High R-7 (4-5)

Condition Census:

- (1) Kagin (11/74): 1500, ex Kagin (11/73): 1501. MS-65. A prooflike Gem acquired by its original consignor in 1972 for a reported \$2,000.
- (2) Kagin (8/80): 1183. Graded MS-63.
- (3) Auction 81: 1319. MS-60 to MS-63. Prooflike and very well struck; identifiable by a rough mint-made flaw on the obverse below the bust.
- (4) AUCTION 81: 1756. MS-60 or better, weak at the lower right reverse rim.
- (5) Walton: 2055. MS-60. Later sold by the author to a California collector (1984).

The nicest AU coins of this date appear to be NASCA (12/76): 566; Carter: 453; and Danny Arnold (B&M, 9/84): 2383.

Notes:

1851-C



Mintage: 41,267

General Information:

The 1851-C is the commonest Charlotte Mint gold dollar. It is, as well, the only date which can be obtained in full Mint State without great difficulty. Its surfaces often have a frosty finish which is more suggestive of a Philadelphia coin than one from Charlotte. Its borders are usually weak and may show considerable die rust. TES in STATES, AR in DOLLAR, and the left side of the 5 are often weak. A broad range of coloration, from coppery gold to deep green, has been observed. Three die varieties are known. The first has heavy stars which are recut and heavily impressed, a recut wreath, and a perfect mintmark. Early states show four clashmarks (from the head) within the wreath (NN 54: 930 and others). These clashmarks fade. Later states show a diebreak at the tops of OF AM. The second variety has heavy stars which are not recut, a lighter wreath which shows no recutting, and a mintmark which is lightly recut. Its latest state shows an obverse rim break from 12:00 to 2:00. The third variety has light stars at the top and heavy stars at the bottom. The date is a bit higher than on the other varieties; the mintmark shows clear doubling, as do UNITED STA and ICA. A crack from the rim to the second S in STATES offers immediate identification. The 1851-C is very popular with type collectors and its auction prices realized are surprisingly high when compared to sales of other, scarcer Charlotte gold dollars.

Rarity:

Total Known: 150-175

Overall Rarity: Low R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
Low R-5	Mid R-5	Low R-6, Mid R-6	High R-6, Low R-7
(70-80)	(50-55)	(20-25)	(10-15)

Condition Census:

A number of Choice or Gem pieces are known. The following are the finest sold at auction in the past decade.

- (1) Auction 81: 1323. MS-67, sold for \$13,500. Probably the finest known Charlotte gold dollar of any date.
- (2) Auction 84: 802, ex Bowers and Ruddy (4/79): 11. MS-65 or better and nearly as nice as No. 1.
- (3) NASCA (12/76): 563, ex Paramount (3/74) fixed price list, ex Scanlon: 1823. MS-65, fully prooflike. The Akers plate coin.
- (4) Amon Carter: 457. MS-65. Struck from heavily clashed dies.
- (5, tie) Bareford: 14, ex Hollinbeck (11/5/47): 1417; and MARCA (5/24-25/85): 1111. Both MS-65. The latter coin sold for \$9,000.

NERCA (5/77): 917 and Eliasberg: 11, ex Clapp, H.P. Smith (Chapman Brothers, 5/1906): 335 are the choicest of the other Mint State pieces. Both are MS-63 or better.

Notes:

1852-C



Mintage: 9,434

General Information:

The 1852-C gold dollar is as scarce as its low mintage would indicate. However, as David Akers has stated, it is less rare in high grades than other supposedly more common dates. This would tend to suggest the existence of a hoard. The 1852-C is one of the more poorly struck Type One Charlotte gold dollars. Its obverse rim is sometimes flat from 5:00 to 10:00 and the stars from 4:00 to 8:00 show less detail than the other stars. A number of examples show weakness from the bases of LA in DOLLAR up to the base of 1 (i.e., the denomination). This was caused by the adherence of some foreign matter to the dies at the time of striking. As this was mint-induced, and is frequently seen on surviving examples, this "imperfection" should not adversely affect the value of the coin. All known coins have a large mintmark. Two date varieties are known. One has a perfect date; the other shows the base of an extra 1 below the center of the base of the 1 in the date. The second variety is often found struck from rusted dies. Like most Charlotte gold dollars, the 1852-C is often overgraded. Thus, many of its 32 or more "Uncirculated" auction appearances from 1944 to 1986 can be discounted. The unusually large number of higher grade specimens known (i.e., those grading AU and above) suggest the existence of a hoard.

Rarity:

Total Known: 80-85

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
High R-5	Low R-6	High R-6	Mid R-7/ High R-7
(31-32)	(28-29)	(15-16)	(6-8)

Condition Census:

- (1) Auction 81: 1328. MS-67. This Gem sold for \$27,000; it has the familiar reverse defect.
- (2) Kagin (9/80): 1190. MS-63 to MS-65; sold for \$12,000. The reverse defect is present.
- (3) Eliasberg: 15; ex Clapp, M.A. Brown (Chapman Brothers, 4 1897). MS-63 or better and fully prooflike with an unusually sharp strike and satiny surfaces. It has the reverse defect. This coin was later offered in Kagin's "Classic Gold Rarities," fixed price list, for \$5,000.
- (4) Stack's (11/12/74): 470, ex Stack's (6/73): 1054. MS-63 or better. The reverse defect is present.
- (5, 10) Bareford: 18, ex WGC: 48; NASCA (12/76): 568; and MARCA (5/24-25/85): 1115 can be verified as MS-60 or better.

Other supposedly choice examples such as Ward: 1585, 1956 ANA: 1584, Neil: 2342, and Bell I: 48 are unlocated and, thus, cannot be verified. Walton: 1757 was of full Mint State sharpness but was dull from a cleaning.

Notes:

1853-C



Mintage: 11,515

General Information:

The 1853-C is the final Type One gold dollar struck at the Charlotte Mint. It is, as well, the most poorly struck date of this type. Many were struck on defective planchets; splits and/or chips are frequently seen. While its borders are sometimes fairly sharp, the central reverse is almost always weak. A coin with a full, sharp date is very rare. Examples which exhibit good lustre are also rare. Three varieties are known. Two have a heavy date, one of which has heavily recut letters while the other has lightly recut letters. The third variety has a light date, normal letters and a double punched mintmark. While of naked-eye significance, this third variety commands no premium. The 1853-C is an underrated coin, particularly in higher grades. In full AU or Mint State it is one of the rarest Type One Charlotte gold dollars, rivaling the more-heralded 1850-C.

Rarity:

Total Known: 85-90

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
Mid R-5 (46-47)	Low R-6 (26-27)	Mid R-7 (8-9)	High R-7 (5-7)

Condition Census:

- (1) Auction 81: 1331. MS-63. Lustrous and semiprooflike with light yellow-gold color. Identifiable by some mint-made roughness from 5:30 to 6:30 on the reverse rim.
- (2) 1956 ANA: 1588. MS-60 to MS-63.
- (3) Stack's (2/78): 975, ex Stack's (6/72): 775. A bit better than MS-60 and sharply struck.
- (4) Bareford: 22. MS-60 or better. Similar quality to the last. Struck on an exceptional planchet.
- (3, tie) NERCA (11/77): 811 and Superior (6/81): 311. Both were graded MS-60 but are on very poor planchets and display especially weak strikes.

Other listings for Uncirculated coins include Jay: 201, Miles: 19, Ward: 1589 (called "choice"), Davis Graves: 1210, Atwater: 2145, and Bell I: 49.

Note:

For many years, the Annual Report of the Director of the Mint listed a net mintage of four 1854-C gold dollars. This entry represents a Mint bookkeeping error and can be explained as follows.

In late 1853 or early 1854, the Philadelphia Mint sent three reverse dies to Charlotte. These were never used in 1854. For the February 1854 Assay Commission meeting in Philadelphia, the Charlotte Mint shipped, among other coins, four 1853-C gold dollars. These were lost en route, probably stolen by thieves. The theft was not reported until the Commission met. The Philadelphia Mint's bookkeepers afterwards charged the Charlotte Mint's Profit and Loss column with the shortage. By accident, this entry later went into Mint Reports as coinage for the year. For further information, refer to Breen's *Major Varieties of U.S. Gold Dollars*, page 11.

Notes:

1855-C



Mintage: 9,803

General Information:

In 1854, the Mint changed the size and design of the gold dollar. The diameter was increased to 14.3 mm. (The Type One diameter had been 12.7 mm.) The new design, by James B. Longacre, was decidedly unimaginative. The obverse copied the so-called “narrow Indian princess head” which Longacre had used for the \$3 coin and the reverse copied the wreath used on the \$3 coin. Type Two gold dollars were minted at Charlotte in 1855 only. The major reason for abandoning this type lay in the flaws of its design. The obverse relief details were far too high, and the planchets too thin, to bring up all the obverse detail when struck. Thus, the hair, DOLLAR, and the date are almost always found weakly struck. Even by Type Two gold dollar standards, the 1855-C shows poor overall quality. The LL in DOLLAR and the 8 in the date are always weak. Most examples show heavy clashmarks on both the obverse and reverse. The obverse border is often blurry, particularly from 1:00 to 5:00. The head rarely shows fine detail but the wreath is, comparatively, sharp. Due to its status as the only Type Two gold dollar struck at the Charlotte Mint this is a very popular date. It is very difficult to find choice. Any strictly EF or better example is a legitimate rarity. Only one strictly Mint State coin is known.

Rarity:

Total Known: 70-75

Overall Rarity: Low R-5

By Grade:

F	VF	EF	AU	MS-60
High R-6	High R-5	Low R-7	Mid R-7/ High R-7	R-8
(14-19)	(38-39)	(11-12)	(6-7)	(1)

Condition Census:

- (1) Elrod Collection, ex Stack's (10/83): 11; Stack's (12/72): 48. MS-60. Probably the only known 1855-C gold dollar which would universally be called Mint State.
- (2) Bareford (12/78): 30, ex Bullowa (10/10/51) and possibly Roach: 1089. AU-55.
- (3) Kreisberg-Cohen (9/73): 1006. Although graded EF in the sale, most viewers called this AU-55.
- (4) Stack's (2/80): 35, ex Stack's (2/78): 980, Stack's (3/73): 743. AU-55 but struck on a poor planchet.
- (5) MARCA (5/24-25/86): 1816, ex Jeff Morris. AU-50 or slightly better. Identifiable by roughness below STA in STATES and at CA in AMERICA.

Jay: 213 and Bell: 50 (described as a "Gem") were both catalogued as "Uncirculated." Heritage (2/84): 44 displayed no wear but was struck on a defective planchet.

Note: No gold dollars were struck at the Charlotte Mint in 1856.



Typical planchet and strike

(Photo courtesy of Mid American Rare Coin Auctions, Lexington, KY.)

Note:

1857-C



Mintage: 13,280

General Information:

By 1855, Mint officials were ready to admit that the Type Two gold dollar was an unabashed failure. Accordingly, Longacre began work on a new design which was adopted on January 1, 1856. The diameter was not changed. The "Indian princess" device was broadened and placed closer to the border. The relief details were made lower in an attempt to facilitate metal flow into both dies. Production began at Philadelphia and Dahlonega in 1856 but no gold dollars were struck at Charlotte until 1857. After 1857 none was struck again until 1859, and the entire output of the Charlotte Mint of this type was only 18,515 coins. The quality of strike found on the 1857-C is even worse than on the 1855-C. Akers goes as far as to say "the planchets used for striking 1857-C gold dollars were downright atrocious, as was the quality of minting." (See *United States Gold Coins, Volume 1, Gold Dollars*, p. 51.) The obverse border often shows extreme weakness from 4:00 to 6:00, with similar weakness on the corresponding area of the reverse. The hair details are invariably weak, as are OLL in DOLLAR and 85 in the date. Its extremely poor quality of strike makes the 1857-C a difficult coin to grade and an even more difficult coin to find in choice condition. The total number of specimens known is somewhat greater than the mintage figure might suggest. 1857-C gold dollars in AU are very rare, and Mint State pieces are of the highest rarity.

Rarity:

Total Known: 100410

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
Low R-5	Low R-6	Low R-7/ Mid R-7	R-8
(65-69)	(25-28)	(8-10)	(2-3)

Condition Census:

- (1) NASCA (12/76): 570, ex Paramount (2/75): 443. MS-60. The Akers plate coin and probably the only example of this date which is universally acknowledged as Uncirculated.
- (2) Kagin (9/80): 1200. MS-60. Not of the quality of No. 1.
- (3) Jay: 221, probably ex Pierce: 1023. MS-60 in overall appearance but struck on a very rough planchet.
- (4) Specimen purchased in Europe in 1983 and sold by Heritage Rare Coins to a California collector. AU-55 but on a rough planchet.
- (5)(6) Two to four pieces grade AU-50 to AU-55. These include Amon Carter: 482.

Notes

1859-C



Mintage: 5,235

General Information:

The 1859-C is the final gold dollar struck at the Charlotte Mint. It has the lowest mintage figure of any individual issue and, in terms of total survivors, it narrowly edges the 1850-C for honors as the rarest *collectible* Charlotte gold dollar. The strike is, on the average, even worse than the 1857-C. All known pieces were struck on defective planchets. All are extremely weak at the borders, Ms. Liberty's hair and plumes, CA in AMERICA and the central reverse. OLL in DOLLAR and 185 in the date are sometimes almost indistinguishable. Two little-known but distinctive diagnostic features are found on this date. The borders are unusually broad and resemble those found on Dahlonega gold dollars. The numerals are narrower than on the 1857-C and they resemble the style of lettering found on New Orleans half dimes of the era. The 1859-C is a "sleeper" among Charlotte gold dollars. In choice condition, it rivals the more highly regarded 1855-C. Strict Mint State coins are among the rarest of all gold dollars. The poor quality of this date, however, keeps its price level somewhat low.

Rarity:

Total Known: 65-70

Overall Rarity: Low R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
High R-5/ Low R-6 (30-31)	Low R-6 (25-27)	Mid R-7 (8-9)	R-8 (2-3)

Condition Census:

- (1) NASCA (12/76): 571. MS-60 but remarkable for its strike and, as such, narrowly finer than the next coin.
- (2) Paramount (2/75): 450. MS-60. Possibly the most lustrous of the few known Uncirculated 1859-C dollars, but somewhat poorly struck.
- (3, tie) Auction 81: 1349, RARCOA (8/78): 610 and NERCA (11/78): 1316. All three coins have claims to a "commercial" MS-60 grade but they are more realistically graded AU-55.
- (4) Walton: 2061. AU-50 or better obverse/AU-55 obverse. Later sold by the author to a California collector (1984).
- (5) Carter: 489. AU-50 or better, poorly struck.

Miles: 42, Jay: 288, Baldenhofer: 1119, Neil: 2347, Bell: 52, and Roach: 1091 were all catalogued as Uncirculated. Jackson: 376 (U.S. Coin Company 5/1913) was also graded Uncirculated. It sold for \$9.

Notes:



Section TWO

Quarter Eagles

I. Classic Head, Obverse Mintmark

1838 and 1839

Total Mintage: 26,020

II. Coronet (Liberty) Head, Reverse Mintmark

a. Small Date, 1840-1843

b. Large Date, 1843-1860

(None struck in 1845, 1853, 1857, and 1859)

Total Mintage: 191,813

1838-C



Mintage: 7,880

General Information:

This coin is made doubly popular by its status as the first quarter eagle to be struck at any branch mint and by being one of only two Charlotte Mint quarter eagles to have its mintmark placed on the obverse. All specimens show clear repunching on the mintmark; it was originally punched much too low, then corrected and placed higher above the date. As a rule, 1838-C quarter eagles are weakly struck on the curls near Liberty's ear and at the juncture of the shield and right wing. The right wing tip, near AM, is often weak as well. The obverse displays a doubled rim; this may be the result of a mismatched collar. Some cataloguers state that a few pieces have a small depression on the cheek which was caused, probably, by a deposit of foreign matter on the die at the time of striking. In fact, this defect appears on 1839-C quarter eagles. This date, while legitimately very scarce, is somewhat overrated. Like most first year of issue coins, a number were saved as souvenirs. Choice examples, however, are indisputably rare.

Rarity:

Total Known: 65-70

Overall Rarity: Low R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
High R-5	Mid R-6	Mid R-7	High R-7/R-8
(33-35)	(21-22)	(8-9)	(3-4)

Condition Census:

- (1) Bareford: 81, ex Atwater: 2020. MS-63. Sharply struck and lustrous. Identifiable by a small reverse mark below ES in STATES. Purchased by dealer Robert Harwell for an unnamed customer.
- (2) NERCA (7/77): 900. MS-60 to MS-63. Semiprooflike with some bagmarks in the fields.
- (3) Specimen seen by David Akers at the 1974 ANA Convention. MS-60 or better; mentioned in Akers' work on quarter eagles.
- (4) Winthrop Carner, ex Coinhunter (9/84): 226, Walton: 2062. AU-55 or better; fully lustrous with a touch of wear on the high spots.
- (5, tie) Winthrop Carner (6/84) fixed price listing, ex Stack's (7/83): 782, Stack's (5/82): 603; and J.J. Teaparty (1/9/85) *Coin World* advertisement (possibly the same coin).

Melish: 1130, WGC: 188, and Bell 1: 187 were all catalogued as Uncirculated. Gaylord: 116 was called a Gem; it may have reappeared as No. 2 or No. 3 above.

Notes:

1839-C



Mintage: 18,140

General Information:

There are two important varieties of the 1839-C quarter eagle. The first is an 1839/38 overdate. It has been estimated that 10,740 of these were coined. Three distinct reverse varieties of the overdate are known. The first uses the reverse of 1838; late states show a vertical crack from the rim through the E in STATES. The second reverse (accounting for approximately 4,860 coins) has no berry, stemless leaves, and arrows which merge into CA in AMERICA. The third reverse has a hook-shaped stemless berry and clear repunching on the second S in STATES. After the three overdated varieties were struck, the old obverse was replaced by a die identifiable by a repunched 39 in the date. Approximately 7,400 were struck; late states show a shattered obverse and reverse. The overdate and repunched date are of equal rarity although the former often commands a slight premium. Both varieties tend to show striking weakness at the centers and the stars. The overdate displays the mint-made defect on Liberty's cheek which was described under the 1838-C. The repunched date coins have unusually broad rims and often have a peculiar greenish yellow hue. As with the 1838-C, this date is coveted by type collectors due to its obverse mintmark. Consequently, it tends to be somewhat overpriced in comparison to the underrated dates of the early 1840s. Mint State pieces are, however, extremely rare.

Rarity:

Total Known: 80-85

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
High R-5 (42-43)	Low R-6 (28-30)	Mid R-7 (8-9)	R-8 (2-3)

Condition Census:

Note: Division into overdate and recut date varieties is impossible as few catalogue listings distinguish between the two.

- (1) Bareford: 82, ex WGC: 189. MS-63. Deep orange coloration; identifiable by toning spots on Liberty's chin, following the D in UNITED, and at the left of the first 2 in 2-1/2 D.
- (2) Merkin (4/70): 657. MS-60 or better. Sharply struck but on a somewhat granular planchet.
- (3) Stack's (2/80): 39, ex Paramount (7/76): 212, Stack's (9/75): 591, Stack's (6/72): 786. AU-55 or better.
- (4) Fairfield: 1471. AU-55. This was later offered for sale in 1984 for \$4,250. It is identifiable by a mark above the fourth star and another mark below the F in OF.
- (5) Elrod Collection, ex Eliasberg: 109. AU-50 or better. A hair finer than the Walton: 2063 coin.

Stack's (6/67): 59, 1965 ANA: 1451, Pierce: 1096, Bell 2: 101, Gaylord: 118, and Bell 1: 188 were all catalogued as Uncirculated.

Notes:

1840-C



Mintage: 12,822

General Information:

In 1840 the quarter eagle was redesigned. Christian Gobrecht's Coronet obverse type (more commonly known as the Liberty Head) was adapted. This design would be used until 1907. The old reverse type was redesigned slightly, placing the mintmark between the olive branch and the denomination. The 1840-C is among the most sharply struck of all Charlotte Mint quarter eagles. Many pieces are bold even at their centers and display equally sharp peripheries. An obverse wire rim from 1:00 to 6:00 and a reverse wire rim from 3:00 to 8:00 are frequently seen on the broad borders. The typical planchet quality is poor, however. The mintmark is very small and it touches the central arrow feathers. Though slightly more available than the other Charlotte quarter eagles of this era, the 1840-C is popular due to its status as the first Coronet quarter eagle. About Uncirculated and Mint State pieces are extremely rare and very underrated.

Rarity:

Total Known: 70-75

Overall Rarity: Low R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
High R-5	Mid R-6	Mid R-7	High R-7/ R-8
(37-38)	(22-24)	(8-9)	(3-4)

Condition Census:

- (1) 1980 ANA: 73. Nice MS-63, discovered in a non-collector assortment in 1979 and consigned to Steve Ivy Auctions. Now in a prominent Texas collection.
- (2) Bareford: 85, ex Neil: 2496. MS-63 but not of the overall quality of No. 1. Very well struck with yellow-gold and coppery toning.
- (3) Kagin (5/78): 1031. MS-60 or better. Coppery orange toning with the left obverse periphery deepest in hue. Graded MS-65 in the catalogue.
- (4) Bowers and Ruddy (6/81): 2531. AU-55 obverse/MS-60 reverse.
- (5, tie) Fairfield: 1472, NERCA (1/82): 1371 and Eliasberg: 113. All three coins grade AU-50 or better.

Harmer Rooke (11/69): 405, Golden I: 2348, WGC: 190, Bell I: 189, Menou: 1304, and Neil: 2496 were all catalogued as Uncirculated. The WGC coin reappeared as Stack's (3/85): 533 and was graded Almost Uncirculated.

Notes:

1841-C



Mintage: 10,281

General Information:

The 1841-C is notorious for the poor quality of its strike. Most specimens are weak on ERTY and the adjacent hair, the curls below LIBE, the eagle's claws, and the leg feathers. A number of examples show mint-made surface irregularities. A knife rim at the upper right obverse and the corresponding reverse position is sometimes present. The edge reeding is wide and coarse; the mintmark is similar to that found on the 1840-C. A few specimens have had their mintmarks removed in an attempt to pass for 1841 Philadelphia quarter eagles. Charlotte Mint coins are, however, far different in their appearances (i.e., their strike, color, and surface texture) than Philadelphia coins and experts should easily be able to detect any alterations. The 1841-C is, overall, an underrated and overlooked date. Any strictly Extremely Fine coin is rare; About Uncirculated and Mint State pieces are very rare.

Rarity:

Total Known: 65-70

Overall Rarity: Low R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
High R-5	High R-6	Mid R-7/ High R-7	R-8
(44-45)	(13-15)	(6-7)	(2-3)

Condition Census:

- (1) Paramount 1974 private treaty sale. MS-60 or better. Said to be lustrous and exceptionally clean for the date.
 - (2) Bareford: 87. MS-60. The sharpest strike known but not of the overall quality of No. 1.
 - (3) Winthrop Carner (June 1984), possibly ex Stack's (8/82): 337. AU-55 or better, fully prooflike. A fully lustrous coin which probably never entered circulation.
 - (4) Fairfield: 1482. AU-55 or better. This may be the same coin as No. 3. It was obtained by the owner of the "Fairfield" collection via private treaty from Paramount.
 - (5, tie) Walton: 2065 and Gaskill: 221. Both grade AU-50.
- Davis/Graves: 774, Lee: 1096, Bell 1: 190, and Ten Eyck: 73 were all catalogued as Uncirculated.

Notes:

1842-C



Mintage: 6,729

General Information:

This is one of the most underrated dates in the entire series and, as well, one of the rarest Charlotte quarter eagles. Like its immediate predecessor, this date is found weakly struck. Its primary areas of weakness are, in fact, very similar to those mentioned for the 1841-C. It has broad borders and sharp knife rims at the upper right obverse and the corresponding position on the reverse. The surface texture is usually satiny; coloration ranges from yellow to light green. Its date and mintmark are both small. No significant die varieties are known. Any specimen grading Very Fine is quite rare; any piece which grades Extremely Fine or better is very rare. Though seldom regarded as such, the 1842-C is, in high grades, one of the rarest Charlotte quarter eagles. Only one Mint State coin is known.

Rarity:

Total Known: 50-55

Overall Rarity: Mid R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
High R-5 (36-39)	Mid R-7 (8-9)	High R-7 (5-6)	R-8 (1)

Condition Census:

- (1) Elrod Collection, ex NERCA (1/82): 1375, Midwestern dealer. A splendid MS-65 coin with fiery lustre and superb color. It was discovered in 1980 or 1981 and had no previous record of sale.
- (2) Paramount (4/79): 762 ex Paramount (7/76): 225. AU-55. Softly struck at the central obverse but fully lustrous and extremely close to Mint State on the reverse.
- (3) Eliasberg: 121. AU-50, identifiable by a mark on Liberty's cheek.
- (4) Miles: 118. Various graded EF-45 or AU-50.
- (5, tie) Stack's (6/66): 904. Same quality as the last but scratched on the throat; Gaskill: 225 was a sharply struck EF-45 coin but had been cleaned.

WGC: 192 and Bell I: 191 were both graded Uncirculated in their respective catalogue appearances. An Eliasberg duplicate was sold in the "H.R. Lee" Sale of 1947 and there graded Uncirculated. It was reoffered as "very close to Uncirculated" in the June 12-13, 1957 New Netherlands Sale, Lot 590.

Notes:

1843-C Small Date, Crosslet 4



Mintage: 2,988

General Information:

The Small Date 1843-C has the lowest mintage figure of any Charlotte Mint quarter eagle. Until the late 1950s, however, it went unrecognized as a rarity. This variety was obviously coined before the 1843-C Large Date as it has the same size date punch and mintmark found on the 1840 to 1842 Charlotte quarter eagles. Most specimens have a knife rim at the left obverse and on the corresponding reverse position. The overall quality of strike is above average, with the obverse always displaying sharper detail than the reverse. Virtually all known specimens have a crack from the end of the bust to the rim at 7:00. In its late state this crack becomes a noticeable bulge. After having been overlooked as a rarity for so long, many dealers and cataloguers have begun to overestimate its actual rarity. According to David Akers, no fewer than eight different specimens could be seen at the 1974 ANA Convention. This "embarrassment of riches" appears to have been something of a fluke and this is still a very rare coin. Virtually all of the surviving specimens grade Very Fine to Extremely Fine; any strictly About Uncirculated or better coin is very rare.

Rarity:

Total Known: 45-50

Overall Rarity: Mid R-5/High R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
Mid R-6	High R-6	Mid R-7/ High R-7	High R-7/ R-8
(19-20)	(17-18)	(6-8)	(3-4)

Condition Census:

- (1) The National Collection, ex Lilly. MS-63. Unseen by the author but confirmed by David Akers.
- (2) Prominent collector; the Akers plate coin. MS-60. Identifiable by three small marks or toning spots on Liberty's neck.
- (3) AUCTION 83: 1850. MS-60. Prooflike with light handling marks including one noticeable near the final star. The coin realized \$5,750.
- (4) California collector, ex the author (1985). AU-55. Semiprooflike but dipped; identifiable by a prominent mark on Liberty's cheek. Accompanying the coin was an old B. Max Mehl envelope marked "Rare. \$27.50."
- (5) Eliasberg: 125, ex Clapp, J.C. Mitchelson. AU-55. Deeply toned at the bottom of the obverse and the reverse; identifiable by a small spot at the rim over the E in AMERICA. The coin realized \$4,675.

Notes:

1843-C Large Date, Plain 4



Mintage: 23,076

General Information:

After the April 28, 1843 delivery of the Small Date variety, a new variety was created when the mint changed to a large date punch. The Large Date coins had, as well, a Plain 4 and a larger mintmark. Like its Small Date counterpart, the 1843-C Large Date is generally found well struck and on well made planchets. All show some degree of repunching on the date (on the 18 in particular) and the mintmark. The original date punch was slanted visibly upward to the right and was then corrected. Most specimens have a wire rim on the obverse from 12:00 to 7:00; a reverse wire rim is frequently visible from 2:00 to 9:00. At least one coin (Mid-American 9/84:1249), has its reverse rotated 90 degrees. The borders are slightly narrower than on the Small Date variety and the denticles are finer. The size of the date is large enough that no one should be confused when determining the specific variety of an 1843-C quarter eagle. In grades of About Uncirculated or higher, this date is one of the rarest of all Charlotte quarter eagles.

Rarity:

Total Known: 75-80

Overall Rarity: Low R-5/High R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
Mid R-5 (50-52)	High R-6 (16-17)	Mid R-7 (7-8)	R-8 (2-3)

Condition Census:

- (1) Fairfield: 490. MS-60 or better. Semiprooflike and well struck except for the eagle's right wing. Identifiable by a tiny mark between the 4 and the 3 in the date.
- (2) Auction 86: 1347. MS-60. Frosty and well struck, with light golden toning. Identifiable by a tiny rim spot to the right of the eighth star.
- (3) Stack's (5/82): 614. AU-55 or better. Very close to Mint State.
- (4) Stack's (9/83): 284. AU-50 obverse/AU-55 or better reverse.
- (5) Eliasberg: 126, ex Clapp, M. David. AU-50 obverse/AU-50 to AU-55 reverse; deep orange gold toning at the peripheries.

Golden I: 2352, Davis-Graves: 776, Bell 1: 192, and Roach: 958 were all catalogued as Uncirculated.

Notes:

1844-C



Mintage: 11,662

General Information:

The 1844-C illustrates how underrated quarter eagles of the Charlotte Mint are. An appearance of this date at auction is seldom—if ever—met with any fanfare. Standard pricing guides accord this date scant, if any, premium above that quoted for a “common” Charlotte quarter eagle. Even the most cursory examination of auction records over the past few years proves, however, that this date is among the rarest of all Charlotte quarter eagles. The strike is always poor. On the obverse, the hair below LIBE and the stars are always weak. On the reverse, the upper leg feathers and the outlines are always weak. Late strikings show die buckling at the centers which further weaken the strike. An obverse wire rim is often found from 1:00 to 4:00 and from 7:00 to 10:00. The surfaces are usually dull and examples with any degree of original mint lustre are virtually impossible to locate. A few survivors possess mint-made planchet defects; almost all known pieces display obvious (and often severe) circulation marks. The vast majority of 1844-C quarter eagles grade Very Fine. About Uncirculated specimens are extremely rare and only one Mint State piece is currently known.

Note: No coins were struck in 1845.

Rarity:

Total Known: 50-55

Overall Rarity: Mid R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
High R-5	High R-6/ Low R-7	Mid R-7/ High R-7	R-8
(31-34)	(12-13)	(6-7)	(1)

Condition Census:

- (1) Ivy (1/78): 897 ex Fairfield: 1497, possibly also ex Roach: 959. AU-55; other viewers felt it is a full MS-60.
- (2) Elrod Collection; ex Eliasberg: 131. AU-55. Weakly struck, especially on the stars. Identifiable by a toning streak in the left obverse field.
- (3) Hughes (1/80): 959 ex Kagin (11/74): 1538. AU-50 or slightly better.
- (4) Paramount (4/79): 763. AU-50. This was later reoffered in the May 1979 Steve Ivy Rare Coin Company Fixed Price List at \$3,950.
- (5) Paramount (2/73): 984. AU-50 or so; not as choice as No. 4.

Piece: 1116, Kern: 120, and Atwater: 2026 were all catalogued as Almost Uncirculated.

Notes:

1846-C



Mintage: 4,808

General Information:

The coins produced at the Charlotte Mint after it was reopened are subtly different from their predecessors. On the 1846-C, the rims are broader and the edge reeding is finer than on the 1844-C. The quality of strike remained basically the same: mediocre. This date is always weak at its centers. The obverse is generally sharper than the reverse. Many pieces show considerable die rust on the obverse and the reverse. Wire rims are present at the left obverse and the corresponding reverse position. Early strikings show the base of an extra 1 below the 1 in the date (Ivy 7/79: 992). This fades quickly and specimens which plainly show the extra 1 are extremely rare. On late strikes, there is evidence that the dies clashed and were heavily repolished to remove clashmarks (Stack's 5/86: 1347). Surface texture is usually satiny; colors range from coppery-orange to deep green. A few specimens are known with matte-like surfaces from immersion in seawater (ANA 1972: 2513). Like the 1844-C, the 1846-C is rare and underrated. Choice examples are, on a proportionate basis, more readily available than for other dates of the era. Possibly a small hoard is the cause for the unusual grade range of the few survivors.

Rarity:

Total Known: 45-50

Overall Rarity: Mid R-5/High R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
Low R-6/ Mid R-6 (23-25)	Low R-7 (11-12)	Mid R-7 (7-8)	High R-7 (4-5)

Condition Census:

- (1) Eliasberg: 137 ex Clapp, David Wilson (Chapman Bros., 1907): 200. MS-63 to MS-65. Die rust at the date and at the fourth to eighth stars. This coin sold for \$10,450 in 1982 and is the finest known.
- (2) Ivy (7/79): 992 ex Lee: 1100. MS-63. Rich light orange and green coloration; less extensive die rust than on No. 1 or No. 3.
- (3) Bareford: 90 ex Gaskill: 243. MS-60. Struck from badly rusted dies; the pattern of die rust is almost exactly the same as on the Eliasberg coin.
- (4) Pierce: 1122 ex Davis-Graves: 779. MS-60. Grading unverified, but its price realized suggests that it was Mint State.
- (5) 1972 ANA: 2513. Mint State but exposed to saltwater. Value of AU-55.

Wolfson: 134, Kern: 121, and Bell I: 195 were all catalogued as "Uncirculated."

Notes:

1847-C



Mintage: 23,226

General Information:

By a fairly substantial margin, the 1847-C is the most common Charlotte Mint quarter eagle. It is, as well, virtually the only date which is realistically obtainable in choice condition. By Charlotte standards the strike is fairly sharp. The stars, hair curls, and the eagle's head are usually quite sharp. All specimens, however, show considerable weakness on the feathers nearest to the shield. The typical surface texture is satiny with a slight tendency toward proof-like reflectiveness. The coloration tends to shade toward deep yellow. A wire rim is often plainly visible on the left obverse and the corresponding reverse positions. Late strikes show plain die rust on the reverse. Due to its periodic availability in high grades, this is a very popular date with type collectors.

Rarity:

Total Known: 100-110

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
Mid R-5 (50-51)	Low R-6 (27-28)	High R-6 (16-17)	Mid R-7 (7-9)

Condition Census:

- (1) NERCA (7/77): 907. MS-65 or better; one of the nicest Charlotte Mint quarter eagles—of any date—currently known.
- (2, tie) Superior (2/75): 1011; Beck I: 120; Fairfield: 1507; and Eliasberg: 141. All of the above are in the MS-63 to MS-65 range.
- (3, tie) Auction 79: 1671; Bowers and Ruddy (6/81): 2352; NERCA (1/82): 1381; and Ivy (5/83): 2535. All of the above grade MS-60 or better to MS-63. Another coin was graded MS-61 by PCGS in 1986 and sold to a Chicago collector by the author in December of that year.

Scanlon: 2047, Pierce: 1126, Bell 2: 131, Gaylord: 129, WGC: 197, and Olsen: 1915 were all catalogued as Uncirculated.

Notes:

1848-C



Mintage: 16,788

General Information:

While most 1847-C quarter eagles are found well struck, the typical 1848-C is characterized by an uneven strike. Many pieces are particularly soft at the center, the stars, and the hair above Liberty's forehead. A few, which are obviously among the last struck, are found with a buckled obverse (Stack's 3/86: 83). These pieces also show a small crack on the reverse from the rim at 10:00 to the top of the eagle's left wing (NERCA 1/82: 1384). A fair number of the survivors are semiprooflike; most display significant marks which detract from their overall appearance. While fairly common in lower grades, this is a date which is almost never seen above Extremely Fine. About Uncirculated specimens are very rare and strictly Mint State coins are of the highest rarity.

Rarity:

Total Known: 75-80

Overall Rarity: Low R-5/High R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
Mid R-5 (48-50)	Mid R-6 (19-20)	Mid R-7 (7-8)	R-8 (1-2)

Condition Census:

- (1) Elrod Collection. MS-63. See No. 2 below.
- (2) Fairfield: 1515. Possibly the same coin as No. 1; Mr. Elrod was not aware of the prior pedigree of his coin. MS-63. If No. 1 and No. 2 are the same coin, then only one Mint State specimen of this date is known to exist.
- (3) Stack's (3/86): 83. Very close to MS-60; no real wear, but struck from a heavily bulged obverse die giving the impression of wear.
- (4) Stack's (3/76): 350. AU-55. Prooflike with some light friction in the obverse fields.
- (5) 1976 ANA: 2797. AU-55. Similar to the last but a bit less prooflike and showing some rubbing in the reverse fields.

Golden I: 2358, Bell 2: 136, Atwater: 2029, WGC: 198, and Bell 1: 197 were all catalogued as Uncirculated.

Notes:

1849-C



Mintage: 10,220

General Information:

The 1849-C is one of the rarest and most underrated of all Charlotte Mint quarter eagles. The date logotype is very small and it sometimes shows light repunching on the 49. The strike, while not as sharp as on the 1847-C, is above average for a Charlotte Mint quarter eagle. The obverse border is sometimes weak, as are the feathers around the shield. Wire rims are very frequently present at the right obverse and on the left reverse. Late strikes tend to show areas of die crumbling, particularly within the 4:00 to 7:00 denticles on the obverse. Many pieces display a deep yellow-green hue and have satiny finishes which tend toward prooflike reflectiveness. Any 1849-C quarter eagle grading Extremely Fine or higher is rare; no fully Mine State examples are currently known.

Rarity:

Total Known: 50-55

Overall Rarity: Mid R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
High R-9/ Low R-6 (29-31)	High R-6 (16-18)	High R-7 (5-6)	Unknown (0)

Condition Census:

- (1) NERCA (11/78): 1369. AU-55. A bit weakly struck but lustrous.
 - (2) Elrod Collection, ex Eliasberg: 149, Clapp, Wilharm. (Mehl, 1921). AU-55. Well struck for the date and quite lustrous. This and No. 1 are almost identical in terms of quality.
 - (3) Stack's (5/68): 712. AU-50 or better. Lustrous but not as nice as Nos. 1 and 2.
 - (4) NERCA (1/82): 1385. AU-50 or better. Fully lustrous with light contact marks in the left obverse field.
 - (5) Pierce: 1134, probably ex Gaskill: 256. AU-50 or slightly better.
- WGC: 199 was catalogued as Uncirculated, Pierce: 1134, Bell 2: 139, Kern: 124, and Dunham: 1945 were all catalogued as Almost Uncirculated.

Notes:

1850-C



Mintage: 9,148

General Information:

The 1850-C is generally placed alongside the 1849-C in terms of overall rarity. The 1850-C is, however, a slightly more common coin. It is invariably found weakly struck. The neck and leg feathers are never sharply detailed but, curiously, the obverse center is more boldly detailed than on other Charlotte quarter eagles of this era. Many pieces are semiprooflike and have wire rims at the upper obverse and much of the reverse. Two reverse varieties are known. The first, which reuses the reverse of 1849-C, has the mintmark gripped in the space between the eagle's claw and the feather above the numerator. On the second, and rarer variety, the mintmark hangs from the end of the feather above the fraction bar and denominator. Specimens which grade About Uncirculated are extremely rare. Mint State coins are of the highest rarity.

Rarity:

Total Known: 60-65

Overall Rarity: Low R-5/Mid R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
High R-5 (35-37)	High R-6 (13-14)	Mid R-7 (7-8)	R-8 (0-1)

Condition Census:

- (1) Pierce: 1137, probably ex WGC: 200. MS-60, light marks. If reoffered at auction today, this coin might very well be graded Almost Uncirculated.
- (2) Fairfield: 1520. AU-55 or better. Identifiable by a small mark opposite Liberty's eye.
- (3) Stack's (2/79): 150. AU-55, prooflike. Similar in quality to No. 4, but rated higher due to its attractive orange-gold toning.
- (4) NERCA (1/82): 1388, ex Stack's (2/78): 1028. AU-55. Semiprooflike but hairlined from a light cleaning. This coin has been graded MS-63 in the past.
- (5) AUCTION 83: 1378. AU-55; contact marks in the obverse and reverse fields.

Kern: 125 was catalogued as Uncirculated. Miles: 149, Bolt: 781, Walton: 2796, Davis-Graves: 783, Atwater: 2031, and Roach: 963 were all catalogued as Almost Uncirculated.

Notes:

1851-C



Mintage: 14,923

General Information:

The 1851-C continues the string of rare Charlotte quarter eagles which begins with the 1849 and continues until the final issue of 1860. The obverse of the typical 1851-C shows weakness of strike in the area below RTY in LIBERTY. The reverse left over from 1849 invariably shows die rust, a result of poor storage. A few pieces are unevenly struck, with small mint-made planchet laminations at the top of the reverse (1974 GENA: 1973, and others). An injury to the obverse die occurred toward the end of the production run and late strikes (Buss: 1709) clearly show this. Still others show a number of heavy diagonal lines at the center of the obverse, as well as clashmarks at the central reverse (NERCA 1/82: 1389, and others). Any piece grading Extremely Fine is legitimately rare; I am aware of only one fully Mint State coin.

Rarity:

Total Known: 60-65

Overall Rarity: Low R-5/Mid R-5

Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
High R-5 (39-42)	High R-6 (13-14)	Mid R-7 (7-8)	R-8 (1)

Condition Census:

- (1) Merkin (4/70): 655, possibly ex Walton: 2075. MS-60 to MS-63.
- (2) Elrod Collection, ex Eliasberg: 157, Clapp, Sears. AU-55 obverse, MS-60 reverse. Identifiable by a mark before Liberty's nose.
- (3) Winthrop Carner (1984) fixed price listing at \$2,850. AU-55, choice for the grade. Possibly ex Pierce: 1141, where it was called "Uncirculated."
- (4) Fairfield: 1527. AU-55. Easily identifiable by a number of obverse adjustment marks on Liberty's face and ERTY.
- (5, tie) Miles: 153, AU-50; and NERCA (1/82): 1389, AU-50, rim nick at 6:00 on the obverse.

Roach: 964 was catalogued as Uncirculated.

Notes:

1852-C



Mintage: 9,772

General Information:

The 1852-C is a bit rarer than the 1850-C, and in higher grades almost as rare as the 1849-C. Most pieces are quite weakly struck at their centers. The obverse is usually a bit sharper than the reverse. On some (NERCA 7/80: 51) the feathers around the shield are almost entirely indistinct. Wire rims at the left obverse and the right reverse are frequently seen. The earliest strikes show very light repunching on the 18 (Pierce: 1145 was described as having its entire date re-engraved but this is unconfirmed). This date is almost unobtainable above Extremely Fine.

Note: No quarter eagles were coined at the Charlotte Mint in 1853.

Rarity:

Total Known: 55-60

Overall Rarity: Mid R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
High R-5	Mid R-6/ High R-6	High R-7	R-8
(31-33)	(18-20)	(5-6)	(1)

Condition Census:

- (1) Stack's (2/80): 49 ex Stack's (6/77): 841. MS-60 to MS-63. The centers were frosty, the peripheries prooflike. The coin sold for \$5,250.
- (2) Stack's (2/74): 714. AU-55. Above average strike for the date; nearly full lustre.
- (3) NERCA(7/80): 51. AU-55. Softly struck at the centers, even for this date, and, as a result, ranked behind No. 2.
- (4) Stack's (9/74): 484. AU-50 or better. Identifiable by a small obverse mark between the third and fourth stars.
- (5, tie) Kagin (4/79): 830 and Stack's (2/78): 1036. Both were virtual AU-50 coins. The piece which appeared in the early 1985 Heritage fixed price listing was a full AU-50 but it had been repaired (scratches removed from above the eagle's head).

Stack's (5/68): 723 was called Uncirculated. It may have reappeared as one of the coins mentioned above.

Notes:

1854-C



Mintage: 7,295

General Information:

After a one-year hiatus, coinage of Charlotte Mint quarter eagles was resumed. Weak strikes are the rule for this date. The obverse is often blurry on the hair around Liberty's ear. The reverse is always weaker than the obverse; the center and the eagle's claws are invariably very weak. Wire rims are frequently present at the upper obverse and lower reverse. The quality of planchets used for this issue was quite poor; some survivors show extensive areas of mint-made porosity at the date and the stars from 10:00 to 1:00 (Stack's 2/80: 50 and others). For some reason, the lustre of this date is very poor. On many coins, the small amount of original surface that remains is interrupted by conspicuous abrasions. While legitimately rare in any grade, choice examples of the 1854-C are available with a bit more frequency than the 1851-C or the 1852-C.

Rarity:

Total Known: 65-70

Overall Rarity: Low R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
High R-5	Mid R-6	Mid R-7/ High R-7	R-8
(36-38)	(20-22)	(6-7)	(3)

Condition Census:

- (1) Merkin (4/70): 667. MS-63. Possibly tied with No. 2.
 - (2) Elrod Collection, ex MARCA (5/85): 1279. MS-63. Prooflike, with rich golden-orange toning. Identifiable by heavy toning at star one and between stars three and four. The coin realized \$10,000. There was an obverse scratch from star two to the middle of the neck.
 - (3) Auction 86: 896, ex Stack's (2/80), ex Stack's (2/77): 714. MS-60 or better. Struck on a slightly porous planchet with the porosity most noticeable in the area between the first star and the 1 in the date.
 - (4) NERCA (1/82): 1392. AU-50 to AU-55. Light coppery toning; obverse hairlines with a horizontal scratch on Liberty. Graded "MS-63" in the catalogue.
 - (5) Fairfield: 1540. AU-50 or better. Identifiable by a few light marks on Liberty's face and two toning spots to the left of the 1 in the date.
- Golden I: 2364; Stack's (9/68): 322; Davis-Graves: 786; "H.R. Lee": 1107; and Bell 1: 202 were all graded Uncirculated.

Notes:

1855-C



Mintage: 3,677

General Information:

The 1855-C has one of the lowest mintages of any Charlotte Mint quarter eagle. It is, surprisingly, a bit less rare than generally acknowledged. The centers are always very weak. The overall strike of the obverse is, however, somewhat sharper than on the reverse. The typical reverse is weak on the legs of the eagle, the arrow feathers, and on the upper lines of the shield. All specimens show a small cudlike rim break at 7:00 to 8:00 on the reverse. Wire edges are often present at the lower obverse and the lower reverse. As the number of choice specimens (AU or better) is slightly disproportionate to the total number extant, it is possible that a very small hoard was, at some time, dispersed. While available in lower grades, About Uncirculated specimens are very rare and fully Mint State pieces are extremely rare.

Rarity:

Total Known: 60-65

Overall Rarity: Low R-5/Mid R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
High R-5/ Low R-6 (28-31)	Mid R-6 (20-21)	Low R-7/ (10-11)	R-8 (2)

Condition Census:

- (1) Paramount fixed price listing No. 18 (Spring 1978), ex Fairfield: 1547. MS-63 to MS-65, fully prooflike. This is the specimen mentioned on page 107 of David Akers' analysis of quarter eagles (See bibliography).
- (2) Auction 86: 1350 ex MARCA (5/85): 1282. MS-60 or better. \$6,000. Satiny, with deep orange-gold toning. Sharply struck except for stars three to nine; light marks opposite Liberty's eye.
- (3) Kagin (4/75): 801, ex Kagin (7/74): 1398. AU-55. Coppery yellow toning; reverse hairlines on the eagle.
- (4) Pine Tree (6/75): 619, possibly ex Walton: 2078. AU-55. Very close in quality to No. 3.
- (5. tie) Paramount (7/74): 271, ex Stack's (4/75): 349, Miles: 166. AU-50 or better. The obverse was a bit baggy.

Lee: 1108 and Bell 1: 203 were catalogued as Uncirculated. A Mint State coin was advertised in the November 13, 1974 issue of *Coin World* at \$6,000.

Notes:

1856-C



Mintage: 7,913

General Information:

The 1856-C has the dubious honor of being among the most poorly struck of all Charlotte quarter eagles. Its obverse is especially weak and, sometimes, the ERT in LIBERTY is almost illegible. Most specimens have mint-made depressions (caused by die rust) before the first and between the second and third stars. Another depression, above the eagle's head, is also commonly seen (Buss: 1711 and others). Others are found struck on granular planchets. The bottom of the obverse and the corresponding reverse position generally display wire rims. Early strikings show light double punching on the mintmark; this fades fairly quickly. The 1856-C is, in high grades, rarer than the more celebrated 1855-C, despite popular belief to the contrary.

Note: No quarter eagles were coined at Charlotte in 1857 or in 1859.

Rarity:

Total Known: 55-60

Overall Rarity: Mid R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
High R-5/ Low R-6 (30-31)	Mid R-6/ High R-6 (18-20)	Mid R-7/ High R-7 (6-7)	R-8 (1-2)

Condition Census:

- (1) NERCA (7/79): 83, ex NERCA (7/78): 1443. MS-60 or better. Semi-prooflike; struck on an irregular planchet which exhibited considerable die rust.
- (2) Elrod Collection. AU-55 and choice for the grade. Pedigree unknown.
- (3) NERCA (1/82): 1396, ex NERCA (4/80): 55. AU-50 or better. This coin was graded MS-60 in the former sale.
- (4) Georgia collector, ex Stack's (5/2/86): 1356. AU-50. Identifiable by a few small marks in the left obverse field; toned to a rich golden hue. The coin realized \$3,190.
- (5) Fairfield: 1552. AU-50. Reverse rust marks at the first A in STATES and the R in AMERICA.

Notes:

1858-C



Mintage: 9,056

General Information:

After another one-year hiatus, quarter eagle production at the Charlotte Mint resumed. The reverse of the 1856-C was reused but the defect above the eagle's head is usually not visible on the 1858-C; perhaps the die was repolished. The strike is, as usual, weak. The centers of the typical 1858-C are weak but, curiously, the outlines of the devices are sharply detailed. The peripheries are usually well defined and the stars and denticles are often bold. The areas which show the most weakness are the curls below LIBE in LIBERTY and the feathers around the shield. Some specimens were struck on granular planchets. Like the 1856-C, this date is greatly underrated. It is scarcer than the more-publicized and higher-priced 1855-C. Even Extremely Fines are rare; choice pieces are virtually impossible to locate.

Rarity:

Total Known: 55-60

Overall Rarity: Mid R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
High R-5	High R-6	Mid R-7/ High R-7	R-8
(33-35)	(15-17)	(6-7)	(1)

Condition Census:

- (1) NERCA (1/82): 1398, ex NERCA (11/78): 1385. MS-60; perhaps slightly better. Satiny, even yellow-gold with a splash of deeper toning at the obverse center. This coin was graded MS-65 in the catalogue.
- (2) Stack's (2/78): 1054. AU-55. Mostly prooflike; struck on an irregular planchet with areas of roughness below TES in STATES and MER in AMERICA.
- (3) Bareford: 100, ex Lee: 1109. AU-55, just a bit less choice than No. 2. Semiprooflike with pale orange toning.
- (4) Eliasberg: 185, ex Clapp, Wilharm. AU-55 obverse/AU-50 reverse. A few marks about the eagle's head; otherwise choice.
- (5, tie) Auction 79: 1181. AU-50 or better, possibly ex Walton: 2080; and J.J. Teaparty January 9, 1985 *Coin World* advertisement, AU-50 or better, at \$2,950.

Notes:

1860-C



Mintage: 7,469

General Information:

The 1860-C was the last quarter eagle struck at the Charlotte Mint. It was among the most poorly produced. The eagle is usually the weakest area of the overall coin. The obverse, which is often blurry, always appears more worn than the reverse (Eliasberg: 151 was graded VF-30 on the obverse and EF-40 on its reverse). The obverse rim is, as well, blurry and sometimes appears somewhat dishd. The reverse was left over from 1858 and shows the same roughness in the field. A number of pieces display mint-made planchet imperfections on both sides, which make grading very difficult. Akers states that the 1860-C quarter eagle must be graded more by its surfaces and lustre than by its apparent "wear." Much attention is given to this date due to its last-year-of-issue status. It is, however, significantly undervalued. Any piece grading Extremely Fine or better is very rare. Just one Mint State piece is known.

Rarity:

Total Known: 55-60

Overall Rarity: Mid R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
High R-5 (31-32)	High R-6 (15-17)	Mid R-7 (8-9)	R-8 (1-2)

Condition Census:

- (1) NERCA (1/82): 1399. MS-60 or better. Lustrous, with coppery toning at the peripheries. A toning streak from Liberty's hair to star 12 identifies the coin. It was graded MS-63 in the catalogue.
- (2) Stack's (9/83): 287. AU-55 to MS-60. Unseen by the author. The sources consulted were divided on grading this coin AU-55 or MS-60.
- (3) Ivy (7/79): 1049, ex Hall: 1767. AU-55. Identifiable by a mark opposite star three.
- (4) Elrod Collection, probably ex Fairfield: 1570. AU-55, just a bit less choice than No. 3.
- (5, tie) Kagin (7/74): 1401 and Paramount (7/76): 284. Both coins grade AU-50 or slightly finer.

Notes:



Section THREE

Half Eagles

I. Classic Head

1838 only

Total Mintage: 17,179

II. Coronet (Liberty) Head, Obverse Mintmark

1839 only

Total Mintage: 17,205

III. Coronet (Liberty) Head, Reverse Mintmark

a. Small Letters Reverse

i. 1840 diameter of 1839

ii. 1840 reduced diameter or 1841

b. Large Letters Reverse

i. 1844-1861

Total Mintage: 845,647

1838-C



Mintage: 17,179

General Information:

The 1838-C is the only Classic Head half eagle struck at the Charlotte Mint. As one might expect, this is an extremely popular date. Research suggests that of the total mintage of 17,179, 10,959 coined in 1838; another 6,220 were struck in 1839 but were dated 1838. Two reverses were used. On the first, the 5 in the denomination was first punched too high and then corrected; this also shows a reverse break which begins at 7:00 on the rim and goes to the leaves, then to the eagle's leg at its left side, the shield, neck, upper edge of the eagle's leg at its left side, shield, neck, upper edge of the wing at its right side, and finally, terminates at 2:00 on the rim. The second (and rarer) variety has a reverse break which also begins at 7:00; it splits the U in UNITED, passes through the eagle and shield, and terminates just to the right of the right wing. The 1838-C is generally weakly struck. The curls below BER in LIBERTY are sometimes weak, but they still show more detail than many of the 1834 to 1838 Philadelphia half eagles. A number of 1838-C half eagles are prooflike, particularly at the peripheries. An unknown quantity of "saltwater" coins are known. These were supposedly recovered off the coast of Florida. Virtually all survivors grade Very Fine; any piece grading About Uncirculated or higher is exceedingly rare.

Rarity:

Total Known: 70-75

Overall Rarity: Low R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
Mid R-5	High R-6/ Low R-7	High R-7	R-8
(51-54)	(12-13)	(5-6)	(2)

Condition Census:

- (1) Stack's (4/78): 853. MS-63. Light orange-gold toning with a few contact marks in the fields. This coin sold for a very strong \$10,500.
- (2) Gaylord: 325. MS-60 or better. Unseen by the author but graded fully Uncirculated by reliable sources.
- (3) Eliasberg: 406, ex Clapp, Massamore. AU-55. Graded AU-50; most specialists considered this coin to be AU-55.
- (4) NERCA (1/82): 1400. AU-50. Similar in overall appearance to No. 3, but showing numerous bagmarks.
- (5) Stack's (7/81): 1712. AU-50. Orange toning; identifiable by a spot below the T in STATES. The coin was graded Extremely Fine in the catalogue.

Olsen: 453 was called Uncirculated and Bell 1: 442 was called Almost Uncirculated.

Notes:

1839-C



Mintage. 17,425

General Information:

Like the 1838-C half eagle, the 1839-C, redesigned by Christian Gobrecht, is a one-year type coin. Most collectors know this is the only Charlotte Mint half eagle which has its mintmark placed on the obverse. Few collectors, however, are aware that the head is subtly but significantly different from that which appears from 1840 onward. The major differences for the "Head of 1839" include the following: the back of the hairbun is further from the 10th star and the neck is more curved than on the "Head of 1840"; and the "Head of 1839" has the right end of the neck further from the 13th star than on the "Head of 1840." Almost every known 1839-C half eagle shows weakness on the curls below LIBERTY and around the ear. The reverse is often sharp but the eagle's left talon sometimes appears flat. Late die states show a rim cud below the date (NERCA 1/82: 1402 and others). While periodically available in lower grades, choice examples of this date are very rare. Any piece grading AU or better is extremely rare.

Rarity:

Total Known: 70-75

Overall Rarity: Low R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
Mid R-5/ High R-5 (42-44)	Mid R-6 (21-22)	Mid R-7/ High R-7 (6-7)	R-8 (1-2)

Condition Census:

- (1) Elrod Collection, ex Garrett I: 480, Elder (November 1920). MS-60 or better. Lustrous and deeply toned about the peripheries. Graded AU-55 in the Garrett Sale; this coin realized \$16,000 and was called Uncirculated by nearly everyone who viewed it.
- (2) NERCA (1/82): 1402. AU-55 obverse/MS-63 reverse. A number of hairlines on Liberty's face kept this coin out of the full Mint State level. Identifiable by a tiny rim cud below the date.
- (3) Eliasberg: 409. MS-60 obverse/AU-55 reverse. Same die state as No. 2 with a rim cud below the date.
- (4) 1965 ANA: 1610. AU-55. Unseen by the author, but its catalogue illustration suggests the grade.
- (5) Superior (6/78): 1761. AU-55, but with a few more contact marks than No. 4.

Miles: 375, Pierce: 1319, Walton: 2083, Kern: 424, Bell 1: 443, and Flanagan: 1222 were all catalogued as Almost Uncirculated.

Notes:

1840-C



Mintage: 18,956

General Information:

As previously described, in 1840 the obverse device of the half eagle was modified and the mintmark was moved to the reverse. Half eagles of this year are found in two distinct varieties. The "Broad Mill" variety employs the 15/16" diameter of 1841 to 1907 and has coarser edge reeding. Philadelphia, Dahlonega, and New Orleans half eagles of 1840 are found with both varieties of borders. Charlotte coins, however, are only found with the broad mill. On page three of his *Varieties of United States Half Eagles, 1839-1929*, Walter Breen relates the following item of interest:

A letter from the director of the Mint (i.e., Philadelphia) to Col. Wheeler, Superintendent of the Charlotte Mint, February 6, refers to 'milling' (upset rim outside the denticulated border) as too broad (and) requests that the coiner make planchets larger than usual to accommodate the extra broad border, and promises to remedy the defect in the next dies. There is no record, however, of any more dies being sent to Charlotte for the 1840-C half eagles.

The striking characteristics for this date closely resemble those for the 1839-C. The borders are, however, a bit less sharp. Some specimens are weak at stars four to seven and on the curl which runs along the back of Liberty's neck. Late strikes show a reverse die break from IC in AMERICA, through the arrowheads, to the base of the right wing (Stack's 5/86: 1361 and others). Late strikes are rare.

This is an underrated date in all grades; Extremely Fine specimens are rare, About Uncirculated specimens are excessively rare, and no Mint State examples are known.

Note: Breen, in his monograph noted above, writes that "narrow mill" 1840-C half eagles, while very rare, exist. David Akers (see page 100 of his half eagle book) feels that no "narrow mill" coins exist. While doing the research for this book, the author was contacted by an Ohio collector who claimed to own an 1840-C half eagle with "ultra broad" rims. He had compared his coin to other 1840-C half eagles and concluded that on his piece, the rims were appreciably wider than 15/16". The existence of the variety remains unconfirmed, however.

Rarity:

Total Known: 55-60

Overall Rarity: Mid R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
High R-5 (38-41)	High R-6 (13-14)	High R-7 (4-5)	Unknown ---

Condition Census:

- (1) Scanlon: 2278, ex Miles: 378. AU-55; a bit weakly struck on the reverse but close to Mint State.
- (2, tie) Bolt: 938; NERCA (12/76): 1223, possibly ex Alto: 152; Stack's (2/80): 57, ex Stack's (6/79): 61 (possibly ex Pierce: 1322); and Texas collector ex the author via private treaty in 1985. All four of these coins grade AU-50.
- (3, tie) Stack's (5/86): 136, ex Stack's (10/83): 91; and NERCA (1/82): 1403. Both of these coins grade EF-45 to AU-50. The former is identifiable by deposits of dirt at 2:00 on the reverse. Another, Mid-American Rare Coin Galleries to a dealer at 1986 ANA Convention, for \$1,200. Bell 1: 444 was catalogued as Uncirculated.

Notes:

1841-C



Mintage: 21,467/21,511

General Information:

As on the 1840-C, the date and mintmark of the 1841-C are both very small. The strike is generally sharp. Charlotte half eagles of the 1840s are, as a rule, sharper than their counterparts of the mid-to-late 1850s. Some are slightly weak on the first three or four stars and the hair below BER in LIBERTY. Many have a nearly full knife rim on the obverse and at 5:00 to 12:00 on the reverse. The typical 1841-C half eagle is very "baggy." More high-grade 1841-C half eagles exist than the three previous issues from this mint combined. This suggests the existence, at some time, of a small hoard. This date is unquestionably rare in Extremely Fine or better.

Note: The mintage figure of this date has been variously reported as 21,467 and 21,511.

Rarity:

Total Known: 75-80

Overall Rarity: R-4/Low R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
Mid R-5/ High R-5 (44-46)	Mid R-6/ High R-6 (18-19)	Mid R-7 (8-9)	High R-7 (5-6)

Condition Census:

- (1) Bareford: 165, ex Melish: 1991, Ryder, Elder (August 1921): 152. MS-65. Struck in deep yellow-gold with green and coppery toning. One of the nicer Charlotte half eagles of any date, the coin realized \$5,750.
- (2) Scanlon: 2281, ex Miles: 382. MS-63 or better, unseen by the author but so graded by many sources.
- (3) NN 47:1441, ex T. James Clarke, Bauer. MS-63 or better. Both this and No. 2 are of nearly identical quality.
- (4) Auction 79: 1237, possibly ex Bolt: 941 or Gaylord: 326. MS-63. Semi-prooflike with deep yellow toning. Identifiable by a mark below the eagle's left leg.
- (5, tie) 1980 ANA: 234, ex Mehl (June 1945): 136; and Stack's (2/80): 58, ex Stack's (2/73): 566. Both coins are fully MS-60.

Other listings for Uncirculated coins include Kreisberg/Cohen (11/72): 1164; Clifford Smith: 1705; Olsen: 656; and Roach: 643.

Notes:

1842-C Small Date



Mintage: 4,595

General Information:

The 1842-C Small Date has the lowest mintage of any Charlotte half eagle. As one might expect, it is the rarest Charlotte half eagle. It lays serious claim, as well, to being the second rarest issue from this mint, trailing only the 1849-C Open Wreath gold dollar. In my opinion, it narrowly eclipses the 1843-C Small Date quarter eagle in the race for the coveted title of the second rarest Charlotte coin. It is known that the first 2,555 pieces were struck on March 22, 1842. Of these, a small number were reserved for assay. The obverse die broke as the last coins were struck. These show an obverse cud above the seventh star at 12:00 (NERCA 1/82: 1406). This feature is, in fact, the easiest way to identify this variety and to test its authenticity. Despite its acknowledged rarity, the 1842-C Small Date half eagle is still vastly underpriced in comparison to other more glamorous but less rare gold coins. Most pieces grade Very Fine; Extremely Fine examples are very rare while About Uncirculated specimens are extremely rare. Only one Mint State 1842-C Small Date half eagle is known.

Rarity:

Total Known: 35-40

Overall Rarity: High R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
Mid R-6 (19-22)	Low R-7 (11-12)	High R-7 (4-5)	R-8 (1)

Condition Census:

- (1) Elrod Collection, ex NERCA (1/82): 1407, probably ex Memorable: 426. MS-60, semiprooflike. Identifiable by a small obverse mark from the date to near the first star and another mark above the 4. Unique in this grade.
- (2) Miles: 386. AU-50 or slightly better. Sharpness of MS-60 but cleaned.
- (3) Pierce: 1331. AU-50.
- (4) Bolt: 947. AU-50.
- (5, tie) 1969 ANA: 1889; Stack's (2/74); and Auction 80: 1460. All three coins grade Extremely Fine.

Notes:

1842-C Large Date



Mintage: 23,589

General Information:

Coinage of the 1842-C Large Date half eagle began approximately one month after the final Small Date pieces were struck. Production continued, sporadically, until the end of 1842. The date size of this variety is similar to the Charlotte half eagles struck from 1843 through 1850. The Small Letters reverse was retained and would continue until 1844. Like its Small Date counterpart, the Large Date variety is generally found well struck although the centers sometimes lack sharpness. A few specimens show lintmarks or other mint-made planchet imperfections. An obverse wire rim is often seen from 11:00 to 4:00; a more obvious wire rim is often seen from 1:00 to 6:00 on the reverse. On the latest die state there is minor die crumbling around the ST in STATES (Stack's 2/80: 60 and others). Though not nearly as rare as the 1842-C Small Date, this is a very scarce date in its own right. Most survivors grade Very Fine; Extremely Fine specimens are rare and any About Uncirculated or higher example is extremely rare.

Rarity:

Total Known: 65-70

Overall Rarity: Low R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
High R-5	High R-6	Mid R-7	High R-7/ R-8
(39-41)	(16-17)	(7-8)	(3-4)

Condition Census:

- (1) Eliasberg: 421, ex Clapp, Sears. MS-65 obverse/MS-63 reverse. Identifiable by a minute rim mark opposite the N in UNITED. This coin sold for \$17,000 in 1982.
- (2) Pierce: 1330, possibly ex Hall: 1921. MS-60 to MS-63. Satiny with very broad borders. Identifiable by a toning spot opposite the D in FIVE D.
- (3) NERCA (1/82): 1409, ex NERCA (4/80): MS-60 or better. This may possibly be ex Gaylord: 327. Identifiable by deep toning at the right periphery on the reverse.
- (4) Stack's (2/80): 60, ex Scanlon: 2283, Miles: 387. AU-55. Identifiable by an obverse edge ding at the first star.
- (5) Stack's (5/2/86): 1364, ex Elrod Collection, Heritage Rare Coin Galleries (1983), Winthrop Carner. AU-50 or better; extremely well struck and identifiable by rich yellow-green toning.

Menjou: 2385, Kern: 425 and Hall: 1921 were all catalogued as Uncirculated.

Notes:

1843-C



Mintage: 44,277

General Information:

While all 1843-D half eagles and the majority of 1843-O half eagles have the Large Letters reverse, all 1843-C half eagles have the Small Letters reverse of 1838 through 1842. The mintage figure for this date is considerably larger than for the previous Charlotte half eagles. Its obverse is usually sharply struck and a wire rim is often present from 12:00 to 4:00. The reverse sometimes displays weakness on the lower part of the eagle's legs. At least one specimen has been reported on an unusually broad planchet (Merkin 6/70: 444). A few sea-salvage pieces are known (NERCA 1/82: 1410). The 1843-C is much more elusive than its mintage would indicate. In high grades, this is a very rare and underpriced coin. Despite a number of auction records to the contrary, we are unaware of a single strictly Mint State example which meets our criteria.

Note: The mintage figure for this date has been variously reported as 44,201 (actually 44,277 with 76 assay pieces subtracted), 44,353, and 44,268. Delivery dates for the year indicated that the first figure (with the 76 assay pieces added) is the correct one. The assay pieces were deducted for accounting purposes, as with many early reports from the Charlotte Mint.

Rarity:

Total Known: 70-75

Overall Rarity: Low R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
Mid R-5 (47-49)	High R-6 (16-18)	Mid R-7 (7-8)	Unknown (0)

Condition Census:

- (1) Stack's (2/80): 61, ex Stack's (6/79): 78, Scanlon: 2283, Miles: 392. AU-55. Pale orange toning.
- (2) Winthrop Carner (1984) fixed price listing at \$3,100, possibly ex WGC: 475. AU-55, identifiable by a small nick on the chin and another at a denticle near the fourth star.
- (3) Elrod Collection. AU-55. Provenance unknown.
- (4) Merkin (6/86): 451. AU-55. Virtually unworn, but baggy and weak in the centers.
- (5, tie) Pierce: 1335, and Auction 83: 381. Both AU-50; the latter was proof-like and had marks below the ES in STATES.
Bolt: 953, WGC: 475 and Flanagan: 1226 were all catalogued as Uncirculated.

Notes:

1844-C



Mintage: 23,631

General Information:

Specialists have, for some time, regarded the 1844-C as one of the scarcest and most underrated of all Charlotte issues regardless of denomination. Anthony Stautzenberger, in his article "Rarity of Charlotte's Half Eagles" (*Nuismatic Scrapbook*, May 1974, pp. 404-408) offers an interesting explanation as to the rarity of this date and the extensive wear seen on most survivors. According to Stautzenberger, by early 1844 the Bechtler Mint (now operated by Christopher Bechtler, Jr.) had earned the unenviable reputation of producing underweight coins of questionable fineness. The public, which had once implicitly trusted the Bechtler coins implicitly, was now wary of the privately-minted product. For the first time, Charlotte Mint coins were the most readily accepted medium of exchange in North Carolina and surrounding areas. This fact, coupled with a halt of production in 1845 (caused by the fire at the mint described earlier) meant that 1844-C half eagles saw extensive circulation. This date is important as the first Charlotte half eagle which has the Large Letters reverse and a large mintmark. The obverse is generally more sharply struck than the reverse. The eagle's legs and talons are almost never seen with much detail. Late strikings show a reverse die break from the right side of the shield to the rim at 3:00. These are very rare. A few choice 1844-C half eagles are known but any example which grades Extremely Fine or better is a legitimate rarity.

Note: No half eagles were struck at the Charlotte Mint in 1845.

Rarity:

Total Known: 50-55

Overall Rarity: Mid R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
High R-5	Low R-7	Mid R-7/ High R-7	R-8
(31-33)	(11-12)	(6-7)	(2-3)

Condition Census:

- (1) Bareford: 166, ex H.R. Lee: 1363. MS-63, choice. Identifiable by a mark below the first 4 in the date; this may be a toning spot.
- (2) NERCA (7/79): 160. MS-60. Identifiable by a series of bagmarks near the second star.
- (3) Kagin (4/79): 861, probably ex Atwater: 1759. AU-55. Rather extensively abraded in the left obverse field and around the mintmark.
- (4) NERCA (1/82): 1412. AU-50 or better. Fairly deep, coppery toning with the richest hues present in the right obverse field. Identifiable by a mark on Liberty's neck.
- (5, tie) Merkin (3/69): 228 and Ivy (2/84): 241. Both AU-50. The former was weakly struck; the latter had numerous abrasions in the obverse and reverse fields.

Golden I: 2543, Flanagan: 1277, and Roach: 646 were all catalogued as Uncirculated.

Notes:

1846-C



Mintage: 12,995

General Information:

Production was resumed in 1846 after the Charlotte Mint was rebuilt. As Stautzenberger relates in his referenced article:

After going more than a year without new coins produced by 'their' mint, the people in and around Charlotte must have pounced upon the mere 12,995 half eagles dated 1846-C.

The numerals used in the date punch are crude and unusually heavy. Two reverse varieties are known. On the first, the top of the mintmark almost touches the claw and feather. On the second, the mintmark is noticeably further away. The stars are often weak, as are the curls below LIBERTY. On both varieties the reverse is particularly soft at the eagle's upper legs. Some survivors have semiprooflike surfaces; a number show splashes of copper toning. In Stack's April 1975 sale an 1846-C half eagle with "seawater" surfaces was sold. Its description stated, in part, the coin was "... from the small hoard which was recovered from a sunken ship 20 years ago." This date is, unquestionably, one of the rarest of all Charlotte half eagles, and even a piece which grades Very Fine is very desirable.

Rarity:

Total Known: 45-50

Overall Rarity: Mid R-5/High R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
Low R-6	High R-6/ Low R-7	High R-7	R-8
(26-28)	(12-13)	(5-6)	(2-3)

Condition Census:

- (1) Elrod Collection, ex Eliasberg: 440, Clapp, David Wilson (S.H. Chapman 3/70): 111. MS-63 obverse/MS-65 reverse. Identifiable by a tiny planchet defect near the ninth star. This coin sold for \$13,200 in 1982.
- (2) Stack's (2/80): 63, ex Stack's (1/74): 632. MS-60 or better. Identifiable by a deep bagmark to the right of D in UNITED. This coin sold for \$7,000 in 1980.
- (3) Bell 2: 647, ex GWC: 481. MS-60. Possibly the same coin as No. 2 but unplated in the Bell 2 catalogue. It was catalogued as Gem.
- (4) NERCA (1/82): 1414. AU-50 or better. Contact marks below the fourth and fifth stars.
- (5) Chicago collector, ex the author, Stack's (5/2/86): 1367. AU-50. Identifiable by a light scrape between stars three and four.

Approximately three to four other About Uncirculated specimens are known. The more famous catalogue listings include Miles: 404; Holmes: 3471; Flanagan: 1277; and Roach: 646.

Bell 1: 449 was catalogued as Uncirculated.

Notes:

1847-C



Mintage: 84,151

General Information:

More half eagles were minted at Charlotte in 1847 than in any other year. Their strike is of average quality. The curls below BER in LIBERTY and the hair below the ear are often weak. The reverse is always soft on the eagle's neck and on the leg feathers. Two varieties are known. The more common one has a high date with the 7 touching the truncation (Eliasberg: 445 and others). The scarcer variety has a slightly lower date with the 7 free. (Ivy 8/83: 4189 and others.) As the demand for half eagles in the Charlotte area was at its peak in the mid-to-late 1840s, this issue circulated extensively. While lower-grade specimens are fairly common, examples in About Uncirculated preservation are very rare. To the best of my knowledge, only two Mint State pieces are currently known. Despite this fact, most non-specialists give the 1847-C half eagle little regard and it is underpriced in high grades.

Rarity:

Total Known: 95-100

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

EF	VF	AU	MS-60
Low R-5 (67-70)	Mid R-6 (19-20)	Mid R-7 (7-8)	R-8 (2)

Condition Census:

- (1) California Collection, ex the author via private treaty in 1985. MS-63 or better; very choice, but for a small bagmark in the left obverse field.
- (2) The Uncirculated coin mentioned by Akers in his work on half eagles (page 135). Exact grade unknown.
- (3) Elrod Collection, ex Winthrop Carner (1984) fixed price listing. AU-55.
- (4) NERCA (1/82): 1415, ex NERCA (11/77): 933. AU-50 to AU-55. Semiprooflike. Identifiable by a few marks opposite star two. Graded MS-63 in the former catalogue and MS-60 in the latter.
- (5) Stack's (2/80): 64, ex Stack's (4/75): 528, Miles: 408. AU-50 obverse/AU-55 reverse.

Bell 1: 450 was catalogued as Uncirculated. Walton: 2934, Pierce: 1351, and Beach: 648 are among the more famous About Uncirculated examples.

Notes:

1848-C



Mintage: 64,472

General Information:

The relatively high mintage of the 1848-C is misleading as it is, in fact, a scarce date, especially in high grades. The strike is usually weak. Those areas showing particular softness include the hair below BERT in LIBERTY and the sixth to ninth stars. Wire rims at the upper obverse and lower reverse are sometimes present. A number of pieces are semiprooflike; many exhibit deep toning with green and yellow. On a few examples (NERCA 1/82: 1417) the mintmark is weak at the bottom. The rarity of this date in high grades can be attributed to the same factors mentioned in the introduction to the 1847-C, above. The vast majority of survivors grade Very Fine and these show extensive bagmarks; Extremely Fine examples are legitimately rare, while full About Uncirculated specimens are extremely rare. No Mint State coins are currently known.

Rarity:

Total Known: 90-95

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
Low R-5 (68-70)	High R-6 (16-17)	Mid R-7 (6-8)	Unknown (0)

Condition Census:

- (1) Elrod Collection, ex Eliasberg: 44%. AU-55 or better. The nicest example of this date by a fairly substantial margin.
- (2) NERCA (1/82): 1417. AU-50. Reverse rim bruise at 6:00.
- (3) Chicago Collection, ex Bowers and Merena (9/84): 145. AU-50. Identifiable by orange toning below the date. Sold by the author via private treaty sale in 1985.
- (4) Stack's (2/78): 1136. AU-50. Sharply struck.
- (5, tie) Kagin's (5/78): 1079; and Stack's (2/85): 1395. AU-50. Nos. 2 through 5 are virtually identical in quality and interchangeable in terms of their order of appearance in this list.

Hall: 1941, Flanagan: 1230 and Bell 1: 451 were all graded Uncirculated.

Notes:

1849-C



Mintage: 64,823

General Information:

By virtue of their similar mintage figures, the 1849-C is often compared to the 1848-C in terms of rarity. The 1849-C is, however, a more common coin. It is, as well, one of the easiest Charlotte half eagles to obtain in choice condition. The typical specimen is well struck, although the centers may show the weakness so commonly seen on the half eagles of the Charlotte Mint. Late strikings are somewhat weak at the stars. A number of survivors are semi-prooflike and have fairly deep green-gold coloration. Some of these coins are characterized by a patch of frost along the eagle's left feathers. The mintmark, which is placed further to the left than on the other issues of the 1840s, is sometimes weak at the bottom. Two varieties are known; both are fairly common. The first has a high date with the 1 lightly touching the bust (Eliasberg: 455 and others). On the second variety, the date is lower and the 1 is free of the bust (Hughes 1/80: 1015 and others). Early states of this second variety show die file marks behind the curls; late states have a small reverse crack from 8:00 on the rim to the left tips of the U in UNITED, to the leaf, (NN 50: 850; NERCA 1/82: 1418 showed more extensive cracks). The relative availability of choice 1849-C half eagles has been a blessing in disguise for this date. It has become a favorite among type collectors who demand high-grade coins for their sets and, as a result, its price level is somewhat out of line with other dates of similar rarity. Most seen grade Very Fine to Extremely Fine; About Uncirculated specimens are scarce and fully Mint State coins are rare.

Rarity:

Total Known: 100-110

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
Low R-5	Low R-6/	Mid R-7 Mid R-6	High R-7
(65-71)	(23-25)	(8-9)	(4-5)

Condition Census:

- (1) Bareford: 171 ex Atwater: 1763. MS-63 or better. Slightly prooflike. Identifiable by a mark below the E in STATES.
- (2) Hughes (1/80): 1015. MS-63. Very deep gold and greenish toning. This coin was graded MS-67 in the catalogue.
- (3) Kagin (1/79): 1232. MS-60 obverse/MS-63 reverse. Prooflike and very sharply struck. Identifiable by its bagmarked obverse. Later re-offered in Kagin's spring, 1979 fixed price list at \$7,750.
- (4) Stack's (2/80): 66. MS-60. Fairly deep, prooflike surfaces, bagmarked. Identifiable by a scratch from Liberty's eye to the edge of the fifth star.
- (5, tie) Elrod: 314 (cleaned); Superior (6/78): 1792; and Eliasberg: 452. All three coins grade AU-55.

Bolt: 967, Hall: 1944, and Flanagan: 1231 were all catalogued as Uncirculated.

Notes:

1850-C



Mintage: 63,591

General Information:

The 1850-C is another date which has a relatively high mintage for a half eagle struck at the Charlotte Mint. The obverse is, as a rule, slightly sharper than the reverse. The obverse, as well, often shows less lustre than the reverse. The date is often weak. The eagle's legs and talons are frequently found weakly struck. A few specimens show mint-made planchet defects. Some are found with prooflike surfaces but pieces with satiny lustre are more frequently seen. A wire rim is usually present on the obverse from 11:00 to 2:00 and the corresponding reverse position. Two varieties are known. The first shows a normal mintmark placed low and above the V in FIVE (Eliasberg: 455 and others); late states have a small crack from 7:00 on the reverse rim to the U in UNITED and on into the eagle. The second variety has its mintmark so weakly impressed that it is easily overlooked (NERCA 1/82: 1421 and others). It is placed high and above the E in FIVE. It is not known which of these two varieties is rarer. A few "seawater" coins are known (Stack's 4/75: 531 and others). While specimens grading Extremely Fine are occasionally offered, any 1850-C half eagle which grades About Uncirculated or better is rare.

Note: Specimens with sharply defined, plainly visible mintmarks are often accorded a 10-30% premium over those with weak, indistinguishable mintmarks.

Rarity:

Total Known: 90-95

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
Low R-5	Mid R-6	Mid R-7	High R-7/ R-8
(61-63)	(19-20)	(7-8)	(3-4)

Condition Census:

- (1) Bareford: 172, ex Atwater: 1764. MS-63 to MS-63 or better. Fully prooflike with greenish yellow coloration. Sharply impressed with a strong mintmark.
 - (2) Merkin (3/69): 250. MS-63. The mintmark was rather faint.
 - (3) Specimen owned by Devonshire Rare Coins and first offered at the 1986 F.U.N. Convention. Nearly MS-63; semiprooflike. Struck in deep yellow-gold with sharp centers but a weak mintmark.
 - (4) Eliasberg: 455. AU-55 with the obverse fully Mint State. The mintmark was sharp.
 - (5. tie) Bowers and Merena (4/86): 2807; and Stack's (5/86): 1371, ex Elrod, Carner. Both coins graded AU-55 and both had strong mintmarks.
- Hall: 1947; Flanagan: 1232; and Bell 1: 453 were all catalogued as Uncirculated. MARCA (5/85): 1460 was very nearly of the same quality as the two coins listed as No. 5.

Notes:

1851-C



Mintage: 49,176

General Information:

Like the 1847-C and the 1848-C, this date is very rare in high grades and is far scarcer than its mintage would indicate. The strike is typical for Charlotte half eagles of this era. The centers are weak with the curls below IBER in LIBERTY and the left corner of the shield showing particular softness. Wire rims are often present at the right obverse and the corresponding reverse positions. The first four stars and the arrow feathers are also prone to show weakness. Most known specimens show a peculiar mint-made "punch mark" in Liberty's earlobe. This mark is small but it is obvious enough to be seen even on low-grade specimens. A few coins (MARCA 5/85: 1462) are known without the punch mark; these are quite rare. The mintmark is high and positioned above the E in FIVE. No major die varieties are known. The typical 1851-C half eagle is heavily abraded, displays rather deep coloration, and grades Very Fine. No Mint State example of this date is known.

Rarity:

Total Known: 85-90

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
Low R-5	Mid R-6/ High R-6	Mid R-7	Unknown
(61-62)	(18-20)	(6-8)	---

Condition Census:

- (1) Elrod Collection. AU-55. Provenance unknown.
 - (2) Pine Tree (11/75): 1520. AU-50 or better. Weakly struck but lustrous. Identifiable by a mark (possibly a toning spot) below the 85 in the date.
 - (3) Stack's (5/82): 659. AU-50; prooflike and well struck. Identifiable by a small mark above the 5 in the date.
 - (4) Southern California collection, ex Heritage Rare Coins (5/84). AU-50. Prooflike and sharp but extremely baggy.
 - (5, tie) Alto: 183; NERCA (7/78): 1316; and NERCA (1/82): 1422. All are AU-50 but show less lustre than Nos. 3 and 4.
- 1966 ANA: 2047 and Hall: 1949 were both catalogued as Uncirculated.

Notes:

1852-C



Mintage: 72,574

General Information:

The 1852-C has the second highest mintage of any Charlotte half eagle. While available with greater regularity than most dates in this series, it is not quite as common as generally believed. The strike is above average. The obverse border is, occasionally, a bit weak; the eagle's leg feathers closest to the shield may show weakness. The obverse often has a wire rim from 12:00 to 4:00; the reverse has a wire rim around much of the border. Three varieties are known, but none stand out as being much rarer than the others. On the first, the date is high and the 1 is embedded in the bust (Cicero: 155 and others). The second has a lower date and the 1 just touches the bust (Eliasberg: 462 and others). The final variety has the date placed more to the left; the 1 is well free of the bust (NERCA 1/82: 1424 and others). The vast majority of the survivors grade Very Fine and are very baggy. About Uncirculated specimens are extremely rare; several Mint State pieces are known from a hoard uncovered in 1986 in southern Indiana. This hoard contained five specimens.

Rarity:

Total Known: 100-105

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
Mid R-5 (56-57)	Low R-6 (29-30)	Mid R-7 (7-9)	Mid R-7 (8-9)

Condition Census:

- (1, tie) Two MS-63 or better pieces, part of a hoard of five discovered by Silvertowne in May 1986. These two coins were not sold. Both had splendid natural color, full frost, and exhibited excellent strikes.
- (2, tie) Three MS-60 to MS-63 pieces which were the final pieces of the hoard described above. These had a few more light marks in the fields. One was sold to a dealer for \$3,000; the other two were placed privately.
- (3) Stack's (3/82): 1128. MS-60 or better. Semiprooflike and extremely sharp. Identifiable by a small mark below the E in AMERICA.
- (4) NERCA (11/77): 936. MS-60. Semiprooflike and also well struck. Identifiable by a toning spot and a small clash mark at the eagle's beak.
- (5) NERCA (1/82): 1424. MS-60. Similar in appearance to the last three coins; this had some light obverse hairlines. Graded MS-63 in the catalogue.

1966 ANA: 2050; Kern: 428; Bell 1: 455; and Roach: 654 were all catalogued as Uncirculated.

Notes:

1853-C



Mintage: 65,571

General Information:

While "common" by Charlotte half eagle standards, the 1853-C is actually somewhat underrated. The obverse is always sharper than the reverse. The area immediately below the shield (and on the vertical lines of the shield) is apt to show weakness. The upper obverse and the upper reverse possess obvious wire rims. The issue is commonly found with abrasions on the surfaces. Three varieties are known. The first has a high date with the 1 touching the bust; the mintmark is strong (Auction 79: 308 and others); late states of this variety show a die break below FIVE (Kagin's 5/78: 1084). The second has a similar date position but its mintmark is very weak (Auction 80: 932 and others). The final variety has a lower date with the 1 free of the bust; its mintmark is weak but not as much as on the second variety (Eliasberg: 465 and others). A small group of "seawater" pieces is known. These come from a Civil War shipwreck which was salvaged in the early 1970s. This hoard consisted of Charlotte and Dahlonega half eagles dated 1852 to 1855. On page 17 of his *Varieties of United States Half Eagles, 1839-1929* Walter Breen writes that the 1853-C "... is scarcer than its mintage would suggest. Col. Green owned only three specimens, and he had dozens of duplicates of supposedly rare dates and mintmarks in this series."

Rarity:

Total Known: 80-85

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
Mid R-5/ High R-5 (44-46)	Mid R-6 (22-23)	Mid R-7 (8-9)	Mid R-7/ High R-7 (6-7)*

*This includes a number of "seawater" coins.

Condition Census:

- (1) Bareford: 173, ex Memorable: 438, WGC: 488. MS-63. Semiprooflike with full contrast and a sharp strike. The coin realized \$7,500 in 1978.
- (2) Auction 80: 932. MS-60. Semiprooflike with gold and copper toning. Identifiable by a number of small contact marks in the left obverse field. The coin realized \$5,250 in 1980.
- (3) Auction 82: 1939. MS-60 but not as choice as No. 2. Prooflike with greenish gold coloration. Identifiable by a rim bruise below the D in FIVE D. Either this or No. 2 above is now in the Elrod Collection.
- (4) Bowers and Merena's Patterson Sale (3/85): 55. MS-60. This coin realized \$2,860.
- (5, tie) A number of AU-55 coins exist; these include Eliasberg: 465 and Bowers and Merena (6/86): 371.
A number of "seawater" Uncirculated pieces are known. These include Paramount (5/76): 1099 and Auction 79: 308. Generally, these coins are not accorded their full Mint State values by collectors and dealers and, accordingly, I feel that they should not be included in the Condition Census listing.

1966 ANA: 2053, Bell 1: 456, and Roach: 655 were called Uncirculated.

Notes:

1854-C



Mintage: 39,283

General Information:

The 1854-C is the first of a group of Charlotte half eagles whose mintages are significantly reduced from the highs of the late 1840s and early 1850s. Some specialists consider this issue to be one of the most underrated of all Charlotte half eagles. Most specimens are very weakly struck on the hair below IBER in LIBERTY and the corresponding reverse position. Pronounced weakness at the first two stars is not unusual. Eliasberg: 468 had obvious vertical planchet striations (possibly adjustment marks) on the obverse, which were of mint origin. Two varieties are known. The first, which is the scarcer by a slight margin, has a very faint mintmark which is positioned above the E in FIVE Robison: 433 and others). The other variety has a sharper mintmark which is positioned above the IV in FIVE (Eliasberg: 468 and others). Late states (Heritage 12/83: 2802, the Akers plate coin, and others) have a reverse crack which begins at the rim just left of the first S in STATES, runs across the eagle to the C in AMERICA, and terminates at the rim. Almost all 1854-C half eagles grade Very Fine. Extremely Fine coins are rare. About Uncirculated specimens are very rare and only one unequivocally Mint State piece is currently traced.

Note: Official records give a mintage figure of 39,291 for the 1854-C half eagles. This amount, however, is incorrect. On page 18 of his half eagle monograph (see bibliography) Breen explains this discrepancy with the following assumption: ". . .the extra eight half eagles are now known to cover a fictitious entry (dummy accounting, ending up in Profit and Loss) disposing of eight assay coins of 1853 lost in transmissison overland to the Philadelphia

Mint for testing by the annual Assay Commission in February 1854." (For related details, see the entry for the 1854-C gold dollar previously described.) Specimens with clear, sharp mintmarks are accorded a premium over specimens with weak mintmarks.

Rarity:

Total Known: 60-65

Overall Rarity: Low R-5 to Mid R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
High R-5	High R-6/ Low R-7	Mid R-7/ High R-7	R-8
(41-43)	(12-13)	(6-7)	(1-2)

Condition Census:

- (1) Elrod Collection, ex Robison: 433, possibly ex Roach: 656. MS-60. The only unequivocally Uncirculated example of this date. Very weak mintmark; planchet streak from star two to the chin.
- (2) Stack's (6/80): 671. AU-55 or better; very close to full Mint State but with light rubbing on the high spots. Identifiable by bagmarks around stars six and seven.
- (3) NERCA (1/82): 1428. AU-55. The obverse was graded MS-60 by some viewers; the reverse was a bit baggy. Graded MS-63 in the catalogue.
- (4) Stack's (5/86): 1375. AU-55. Satiny with medium yellow-gold toning. Weak Mintmark variety. Previously owned by Stanley Elrod, who purchased it privately in 1983.
- (5. tie) Heritage (12/83): 2802; NERCA (11/78): 1493; and Paramount (7/76): 333 are all About Uncirculated specimens.

Melish: 2073, Memorable: 439, and Bell: 457 were all catalogued as Uncirculated.

Notes:

1855-C



Mintage: 39,789

General Information:

While the 1855-C has a mintage almost identical to the 1854-C, it is not as rare. The strike is sharper than most of the other Charlotte half eagles of the 1850s. Although generally weak at the centers, a few specimens show unusually sharp details on Liberty's curls and the eagle's feathers. The mint-mark is sharp and it is positioned above the left side of the E in FIVE. No significant varieties are known. "Seawater" pieces, from the same hoard that contained 1853-C half eagles (see above) constitute many of the higher-grade offerings of the past decade. Original, non-"seawater" pieces which grade Extremely Fine or better are rare; Mint State pieces are extremely rare.

Rarity:

Total Known: 75-80

Overall Rarity: R-4/Low R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
High R-5	Low R-6/ High R-6	Low R-7/ Mid R-7	High R-7/ R-8
(40-41)	(23-25)	(9-10)	(3-4)

Condition Census:

- (1) Stack's (3/76): ex Wilharm (Mehl 2/21): 307. MS-63 and very choice overall.
 - (2) Elrod Collection, via private treaty from a Midwestern dealer in the 1970s. MS-63. A number of specialists who have viewed both this coin and the above specimen feel that the two are virtually identical in terms of overall quality.
 - (3) NERCA (1/82): 1430. AU-55. Graded MS-65 in the catalogue. Identifiable by a scratch below the date.
 - (4) Sotheby's (10/85): 100. AU-55. Prooflike and struck in bright yellow-gold. Virtually free of wear, but baggy, especially in the fields.
 - (5) Jack Hancock inventory (circa 3/86). AU-53; graded as such by PCGS. "Seawater" Uncirculated pieces include Heritage Inaugural 1983 fixed price listing at \$2,550, and others.
- Gaylord: 337; Gaylord: 338; Miles: 435; Stack's (1/58): 1912; and Flanagan: 1237 were all catalogued as Uncirculated.

Notes:

1856-C



Mintage. 28,457

General Information:

Despite its relatively low mintage, the 1856-C remains an overlooked and underrated issue. Its strike is not as sharp as the 1855-C. There are usually areas of weakness below LIBERTY, on the back of the hairbun, and on the first, second, 12th, and 13th stars. The reverse is weak at the juncture of the shield and the eagle's left wing. A few specimens show die rust below the eagle's left wing and at the lower left obverse (NERCA: 7/80: 153 and others). Survivors often display dull, heavily abraded surfaces and are unattractive. "Seawater" coins are known (NERCA 1/82: 1431 and 1432); they command much lower prices than original pieces would. Virtually all 1856-C half eagles grade Very Fine; About Uncirculated specimens are very rare and no strictly Mint State pieces are currently known.

Rarity:

Total Known: 70-75

Overall Rarity: Low R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
Mid R-5/ High R-5 (43-46)	Mid R-6/ High R-6 (18-19)	Low R-7/ Mid R-7 (9-10)	Unknown (0)

Condition Census:

- (1) Auction 84: 913. AU-55. Semiprooflike with light orange-gold toning. Identifiable by a number of small marks in the fields below OF and ES in STATES.
- (2) Kagin (9/80): 1314. AU-50 to AU-55. Well struck, with light yellowish toning. Weak from 3:00 to 6:00 on the obverse rim, marked behind the 6 in the date, and spotted below the right foot to the second A in AMERICA.
- (3, tie) NERCA (7/80): 153. AU-50 or better. Identifiable by extensive die rust at the lower obverse and below the left wing on the reverse; Auction 85: 1432, identifiable by a dark area at AME on the reverse.
- (4) NERCA (3/79): 944, ex NERCA (5/78): 1051. AU-50 or better. Not as choice as No. 3 due to heavily bagmarked obverse fields.
- (5, tie) 1969 ANA: 1943; Paramount (7/76): 338; NERCA (1/82): 1432 ("sea-water" surfaces); and Winthrop Carner 1984 inventory. All grade AU-50.

1966 ANA: 2067; Bell 2: 680; and Hall: 1967 were all graded Uncirculated.

Notes:

1857-C



Mintage: 31,360

General Information:

Traditionally, the 1857-C half eagle has been grouped with the 1855-C and 1856-C in measuring relative levels of rarity. The 1855-C and the 1857-C are almost identical in terms of rarity; the 1856-C is, by a slight margin, the rarest of these three dates. The 1857-C shows weakness on the curls below LIBER, the eagle's neck, and the feathers around the shield. A wire rim, running from 6:00 to 11:30 on the obverse and the corresponding reverse area, is common. The higher-grade survivors show good lustre which tends to be of a satiny texture; semiprooflike coins are known but are very rare. The coloration is usually somewhat dark, with rich coppery orange toning on uncleaned pieces. The mintmark is sometimes a bit faint; it is positioned above the VE in FIVE. Most 1857-C half eagles grade Very Fine; Extremely Fine coins are scarce, while About Uncirculated specimens are extremely rare. Only two strictly Mint State pieces are currently known.

Rarity:

Total Known: 75-80

Overall Rarity: R-4/Low R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
High R-5	Low R-6/ Mid R-6	Mid R-7	High R-7
(41-44)	(24-25)	(7-8)	(3)

Condition Census:

- (1) NERCA (7/76): 1505. MS-65 obverse/MS-63 reverse. Semiprooflike and very well struck. Identifiable by a mint-made reverse planchet chip below ME in AMERICA. This coin sold for \$4,000 in 1976.
- (2) NERCA (1/82): 1434, ex Stack's (2/78): 1158. MS-60 obverse/MS-63 reverse. Coppery orange toning. Identifiable by a small bagmark on Liberty's chin as well as other small bagmarks in the obverse fields. Graded MS-65 in the catalogue.
- (3) Specimen from the Jackson, Tennessee hoard found during a construction excavation in late 1985. MS-60 or better; possibly superior to No. 2 but not examined by the author. Confirmed by David Akers. This hoard contained numerous Southern gold coins of various denominations. As the dispersal of this hoard was erratic and shrouded in secrecy, no exact inventory of the Charlotte coins contained therein is available.
- (4) Elrod Collection, ex Stack's (2/80): 74, Alto: 201. AU-55. Fully lustrous but with just a bit of friction in the fields. Identifiable by a reverse mark below F in OF
- (5) Eliasberg: 483. AU-55. Very similar in quality to the last but a bit less lustrous.

Hall: 1971 and Bell 1: 460 were both graded Uncirculated.

Notes:

1858-C



Mintage: 38,856

General Information:

The 1858-C is the last Charlotte half eagle which can be found with an acceptable strike. Many examples of this date exhibit semiprooflike surfaces as well as a pleasing coppery coloration. The central details are a bit sharper than on the preceding issues from this mint. A few pieces show virtually full definition on Liberty's curls and the eagle's feathers. The first star is often weak and late strikes sometimes display weakness on the O in OF. The mintmark is slightly larger than on the 1857-C. Two reverse varieties are known. The first has the mintmark above the VE in FIVE (Akers plate coin and others). The second, which is decidedly scarcer, has the mintmark mostly above the E in FIVE (NERCA 1/82: 1436 and others). The 1858-C is normally found in Very Fine or Extremely Fine grades; About Uncirculated coins are extremely rare.

Rarity:

Total Known: 80-81

Overall Rarity: R-4/Low R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
High R-5 (37-39)	Low R-6 (29-30)	Mid R-7 (7-8)	R-8 (2-3)

Condition Census:

- (1) NERCA (1/82): 1436. MS-60 obverse/ MS-63 reverse. Identifiable by a reverse rim nick at 12:00.
- (2) Auction 79: 311. MS-60. Semiprooflike and the sharpest strike seen on an example of this date. Identifiable by four tiny marks on Liberty's face.
- (3) Stack's (5/86): 1380. MS-60. Identifiable by some light scratches to the left of the date, some die rust on the cheek, and die polish lines between stars six and seven. The coin realized \$3,600.
- (4) MARCA (5/85): 1486. AU-55 or better, and quite close to a full MS-60. Lustrous and well struck, with golden orange coloration. Identifiable by a few obverse rim marks at 3:00 to 4:00.
- (5 - tie) Elrod Collection, ex Bowers and Merena (11/83): 4247; Winthrop Carner inventory, 1984; Auction 86: 402, toned above the head at stars seven and eight. All grade AU-55; the second had a reverse rim nick at 5:00.

Pierce: 1389, Flanagan: 1240, and Roach: 660 were all graded Uncirculated.

Notes:

1859-C



Mintage: 31,847

General Information:

All 1859-C half eagles display a very weak reverse. As David Akers and other writers have stated, this weakness is a result of die problems, not poor striking. There are two possible causes of these problems. On some coins it is possible that the reverse die used was improperly annealed. On others, extensive die rust gives the impression of striking weakness. A number of 1859-C half eagles show extensive die rust on the reverse and, to a lesser degree, on the obverse (NERCA 1/82: 1437 and 1438, and others). It is highly probable that these pieces were struck in 1860 or 1861. As one might expect, the 1859-C is a very difficult coin to grade. To do so accurately, the viewer must give special consideration to the obverse sharpness and to the overall quality of the surfaces. The obverse will always be much sharper than the reverse, but it will show weakness at the curls below LIBER and on the hairbun. The mintmark is similar in size to the 1858-C but is placed higher than on the two varieties of that year; the position is centrally atop the VE in FIVE. A few "seawater" coins are known (Stack's 2/80: 76 and others). In lower grades the 1859-C is somewhat overrated but any piece which grades About Uncirculated is rare; fully Mint State coins are very rare.

Rarity:

Total Known: 80-85

Overall Rarity: R-4

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
High R-5	High R-5/ Low R-6	Low R-7/ Mid R-7	High R-7
(37-39)	(30-31)	(9-10)	(4-5)

Condition Census:

- (1) Eliasberg: 493, ex Clapp, Sears. Graded MS-63 obverse/MS-60 reverse in the catalogue; others called it MS-65 obverse/MS-63 reverse. Struck on a somewhat irregular planchet. Identifiable by a small mark on the truncation above the 1, and a larger mark between the E and the D in FIVE D. The coin sold for \$8,800 in 1982, and was later resold for \$12,500 in November 1985 to a collector.
- (2) Specimen purchased in Europe and sold to a dealer in 1984 by Heritage Rare Coins. MS-60 or better obverse/MS-60 reverse. Rich copper toning; struck on a nice planchet. Slightly superior to the next coin.
- (3) Elrod Collection, ex Stack's (10/82): 1341. MS-60 or better obverse/MS-60 reverse. Identifiable by a small mark below the second S in STATES and O in OF.
- (4) Stack's (10/84): 1049. MS-60 obverse/MS-60 or so reverse. Identifiable by a reverse planchet flaw from the eagle's head to the last S in STATES.
- (5, tie) NERCA (1/82): 1438. AU-55. Graded MS-63 in the catalogue. Identifiable by a small mark near Liberty's nose. Stack's (5/86): 1380. Identifiable by some light marks in the left obverse field and a die polish mark between stars seven and eight. Also AU-55.

1965 ANA: 1615; Bell 2: 693; Memorable: 442; Bell 1: 462; and Flanagan: 1241 were all catalogued as Uncirculated.

Notes:

1860-C



Mintage: 14,813

General Information:

Since the 1860-C was struck from the same reverse die as the 1859-C the same striking peculiarities are present. The obverse is sharp, though not as sharp as the 1859-C. The obverse center is often quite weak, with the curl below the ear mostly invisible. A wire rim is frequently seen around the obverse peripheries (Auction 81: 1432 and others). There are two die varieties known. The first has a normal date and employs the rusted reverse of 1859. The second variety (first described in NN49: 441) has a double-punched date, with the first punch positioned to the left. The re-punching is readily visible to the naked eye and it is very rare. Most 1860-C half eagles are found in Very Fine or Extremely Fine grades, and any specimen grading strictly About Uncirculated or better is rare. Mint State pieces are very rare.

Rarity:

Total Known: 76-81

Overall Rarity: Low R-5

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
High R-5	Low R-6/ Mid R-6	Low R-7	High R-7
(40-41)	(24-25)	(8-10)	(4-5)

Condition Census:

- (1) Stack's (2/79): 460. MS-60 to MS-63. The obverse is far choicer than Nos. 2 and 3; the reverse is, of course, weak on all of these. This specimen is identifiable by some obverse rust at stars two through four and by a mark below Liberty's neck.
 - (2) Auction 81: 1432. MS-60. Slightly prooflike, with light orange and gold toning. Identifiable by roughness in the left obverse field and by reverse toning spots at FI, the eagle's left wing and head, and E in AMERICA.
 - (3) Texas collection, ex the author via private treaty in January 1986. MS-60. Satiny, with rich orange coloration. Identifiable by a thin polishing mark inside star two and by a reeding mark on Liberty's jaw. Ex Melnick (2/84): 3608 at \$3,400.
 - (4) Eliasberg: 497, ex Clapp, Steigerwalt. AU-55 or better obverse/AU-50 reverse. Identifiable by obverse rust between stars one and two and marks on Liberty's ear.
 - (5) Auction 86: 1398. AU-55 obverse/AU-50 reverse. Identifiable by a tiny obverse toning spot below star four, some toning at stars six and seven, and an area of roughness at 3:00 on the reverse rim; Stack's (5/9/86): 1381. AU-55 obverse/AU-50 reverse. Identifiable by a tiny mark inside star six, another to the left of the curl, and a final one on the rear of the base of the truncation. Now in a Georgia collection.
- Flanagan: 1242 was called Uncirculated.

Notes:

1861-C



Mintage: 6,879

General Information:

The 1861-C is the last Charlotte half eagle, as well as the final issue of any denomination struck at this mint. The mintage figure of 6,879 includes 887 coins which were struck in May under the Confederacy. On April 20 the Charlotte Mint was seized by rebel troops. Mint employees were forced to take oaths of loyalty to the Confederacy or lose their jobs. It is impossible to identify positively those pieces struck during Confederate control. It is traditionally assumed that those which were struck from rusted dies and show die cracks through the tops of AMERI are the most likely candidates. The quality of the strike is considerably better than on the 1859-C or 1860-C. Stars one through three and the curls below IBER in LIBERTY are usually the weakest details on the obverse. The reverse is always found very sharp, although the feathers on the eagle's neck are sometimes weakly impressed. Many survivors show either mint-made surface marks or display extensive abrasions. Many pieces exhibit "crumbling" in the denticles. (This is also seen on many dates in the 1850s). While a bit overrated in comparison to other Charlotte half eagles, the 1861-C is a rare (and historic) coin. Most survivors grade Very Fine or Extremely Fine. About Uncirculated specimens are rare, but are sometimes available at auction. Only one Mint State piece is currently known.

Rarity:

Total Known: 60-65

Overall Rarity: High R-5 to Low R-6

By Grade:

VF	EF	AU	MS-60
Low R-6	Low R-6/ Mid R-6	Mid R-7	R-8
(27-29)	(24-26)	(8-9)	(1)

Condition Census:

- (1) Elrod Collection, ex NERCA (1/82): 1441, Brownlee, Kagin. MS-60. Struck on a lightly striated planchet. Identifiable by a small mark opposite the bridge of Liberty's nose.
- (2) NASCA (12/80): 350, ex Stack's (2/80): 78, Scanlon: 2317, Miles: 462. AU-55 obverse/AU-50 reverse. Fairly extensive marks in the obverse fields; reverse planchet defect below the eagle's beak.
- (3) NERCA (11/78): 1505. AU-50 or better. Identifiable by an obverse rim nick at 11:00.
- (4, tie) 1969 ANA: 1963; Paramount (11/73): 1945; Paramount (2/74): 662; Stack's (12/75): 910; Beck I: 463; Paramount (7/76): 353; Ivy (7/79): 1236; and Hughes (1/80): 1017. The above eight listings, representing three to five pieces, are all AU-50 coins.

Bell 1: 464; and Flanagan: 1242 were both called Uncirculated.

Notes:

Rarity Analysis

1. Gold Dollars

Total Issues: 8 (**Note:** Not including the 1849-C Open Wreath)

Total Number Known: 695-763

Breakdown by Grade:

Fine: 14-19

Very Fine: 361-381

Extremely Fine: 207-222

About Uncirculated: 79-93

Mint State: 34-48

Average Extant Per Issue: 86.88-95.38

2. Quarter Eagles

Total Issues: 20

Total Number Known: 1,225-1,325

Breakdown by Grade:

Very Fine: 709-746

Extremely Fine: 337-366

About Uncirculated: 142-162

Mint State: 37-51

Average Extant per Issue: 61.20-63.05

3. Half Eagles

Total Issues: 24

Total Number Known: 1,748-1,874

Breakdown by Grade:

Very Fine: 1,064-1,118

Extremely Fine: 458-488

About Uncirculated: 171-199

Mint State: 56-70

Average Extant per Issue: 72.75-78.00

From the statistics listed above, the following conclusions can be formed:

1. Gold Dollars: On a per-issue basis, gold dollars are the most frequently encountered of all Charlotte gold denominations. Slightly more than 75% of all the extant gold dollars from the Charlotte Mint grade Very Fine or Extremely Fine. Uncirculated pieces are more frequently seen than any other denomination; this is primarily due to the relative availability of the 1851-C.

2. Quarter Eagles: This is the single rarest denomination. Nearly 85% of all the surviving specimens grade Very Fine to Extremely Fine. About Uncirculated coins turn up more frequently, on a relative basis, than for the other two denominations. Uncirculated pieces are less frequently encountered than in the other two denominations: less than 3% of the surviving population grades as such.

3. Half Eagles: In terms of the overall number known, half eagles are the most common of the three denominations. In terms of actual numbers extant per issue, the half eagle is more common than the quarter eagle, but scarcer than the gold dollar. In Mint State, this denomination is nearly as rare as the quarter eagle.

4. Overall Rarity: The great majority of all Charlotte Mint gold coins are found in either Very Fine or Extremely Fine. Any coin grading About Uncirculated is rare while any fully Mint State coin is very rare.

Grading Commentary

The Condition Census and In Grade Rarity data which follow are based on “modern” grading standards and the reader should interpret this data accordingly.

I have discounted virtually all auction records and miscellaneous references to grades which appeared prior to the 1960s. While old cataloguers such as the Chapman Brothers and B. Max Mehl may be fondly remembered for their contributions to numismatics, their grading standards were not as precise as modern standards. And, unfortunately, their descriptive standards (i.e., their tendency to call any coin with prooflike surfaces a Proof) invalidate many of these old listings.

Auction records of the 1960s have not been discounted but they have been “compensated” for. By this, we mean that today’s grading standards are, at least, a full grade tighter. In other words, a coin which might have appeared in a firm’s 1969 sale as “Gem Uncirculated” (i.e., MS-65) will most probably grade MS-60 by today’s standards.

In the Condition Census and In Grade Rarity sections of this book, the grading standards (and references to specific coins) are reckoned by today’s strict grading standards. Any collector evaluating a potential Condition Census or high-grade piece should employ these standards. For detailed points on how to grade Charlotte coins according to these rigorous standards, I suggest that the collector familiarize himself with the grading section in this reference.

Grading Guide

The challenge of assembling a set or collection of Charlotte Mint coins is rivalled by the difficulty of grading the various issues. The grading standards for most United States gold coins are predicated upon such factors as strike, surface condition, color, and lustre. When grading Charlotte coins, these standards cannot be as rigidly applied. It is imperative to remember that Charlotte coins are as varied, on a coin-to-coin basis, as modern Lincoln cents are similar. This is, after all, part of the allure of collecting Charlotte coins.

Gold is a soft coinage metal. Because of this, strike does not usually play as much of a role as on, for example, nickel coins. Virtually all branch mint gold coins were poorly struck and Charlotte's products are no exception. It must be understood that the primary function of the Charlotte Mint was to provide a quick and cheap minting source—not to produce coins of great artistic merit. Quality control was rudimentary, and, by 1848, the mint had been, for practical purposes, rendered obsolete by the discoveries of gold in California.

The most poorly produced of all Charlotte coins were the gold dollars. The tiny size and complicated design of this issue plagued the Mint. The combination of a difficult design and old, worn obverse dies made any hope of producing well-struck gold dollars impossible. Walter Breen has observed that the Philadelphia Mint would annually send only reverse dies to the Southern branch mints, as enough old obverses were available for the year's coinage.

Of the two remaining denominations struck at the Charlotte Mint, quarter eagles are the most apt to show very poor quality. The small size planchet was difficult to coin, resulting in splits and chips which are sometimes seen. The final result of these problems can be seen on many surviving Charlotte coins. It is not unusual to find heavily clashed dies, grossly uneven strikes and die rust.

During the past few decades, the grading standards for Charlotte coins have been noticeably tightened. As an example, the Very Fine-35 1855-C quarter eagle sold as Lot 1031 in the Steve Ivy July 1979 sale had been graded Nearly Uncirculated when it was last offered by B. Max Mehl in his February 1944 Roach Sale. Thus, almost all of the pre-1970 auction records for Uncirculated Charlotte coins can be disregarded; by today's standards these pieces grade, on average, Extremely Fine. The comments on grading that follow should provide the beginning collector with a working description of the important point to notice in each grade.

Fine (Fine-12):

All letters in LIBERTY will be legible except for the upper left corner of the L. The hair will show very little detail and the jaw will be worn smooth. The rims and denticles will be smooth. The eagle's feathers will show less than 50% of their original detail, while the claws will show little or no detail.

The lines in the shield will be merged. In addition to heavy wear, a number of significant abrasions or planchet flaws may be present.

Fine or better (Fine-15)

Slightly more detail will be present, especially on the feathers. The color and surface will be more pleasing. There will be more eye appeal than on a Fine coin.

Very Fine (Very Fine-20)

LIBERTY will be fully readable. Some of the hair detail, especially that above the tiara, will be visible. The rims and the denticles, depending on the date/issue, will show some detail. 50% of the eagle's feathers will be visible, and the outlines of the claws will be present. The shield lines, particularly the vertical ones, will show over 50% of their original detail. The pattern of wear will be even but a number of abrasions or planchet flaws may be present.

Very Fine or better (Very Fine-35)

LIBERTY will be noticeably sharper, as will the hair and feather details. Less wear will be present on the wing tips and the shield lines will be sharper. The color and surfaces will be more pleasing than on a Very Fine coin.

Extremely Fine (Extremely Fine-40)

Wear will be obvious but minimal. Most of the wear will be confined to the tip of the coronet, the hair about Liberty's ear, and the wing tips. The shield and claws will show virtually all of their definition, except on specific issues where these details are always found weakly struck. There will be traces of original mint lustre, especially in the protected areas (i.e., in the field areas closest to the devices and about the stars and the lettering). A few abrasions or planchet flaws may be present.

Extremely Fine or better (Extremely Fine-45)

The amount of wear will be somewhat lighter, especially on the cheek, below Liberty's eye, and on the wing tips. Approximately 25% to 50% of the original mint lustre will be present except on those specific dates/issues which are typically found dull. The color and surfaces will be more pleasing than on an Extremely Fine coin.

About Uncirculated (About Uncirculated-50)

There will be a very small amount of wear visible to the naked eye, concentrated on the tip of the coronet and, when applicable, on the hair below LIBERTY and about the ear. On the reverse, wear will be concentrated on the wing tips and, where applicable, on the feathers below the eye and above the claws. At least half of the original mint lustre will be visible, except on typically dull issues and/or "seawater" coins. While bagmarks may be present,

no severe planchet flaws should be found (unless more than half of the lustre is present).

About Uncirculated or better (About Uncirculated-55)

The only areas showing definite wear will be the highest relief details. At least three-quarters of the original lustre will be present; the protected areas may have unbroken lustre. The color will be original and the surfaces will show minimal marks and no severe problems. To many, the coin will appear to be fully Mint State.

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References

While the number of books which deal with the Charlotte Mint and its coinage is limited, a number of auction catalogues contain important individual coins or specialized collections. The following list, while not all encompassing, includes many works of importance for the specialist.

Firm	Date of Sale	Name of Collection(s)
Mehl	2/8/1944	Roach
Stack's	3/23-25/1944	Flanagan
Mehl	11/7/1944	Olsen
Stack's	12/7-9/1944	"Bell 1" (Shapiro)
Stack's	5/15-19/1945	Hall
Numismatic Gallery	1/25-26/1946	"WGC" (Boyd)
Mehl	6/11/1946	Atwater
Mehl	6/17/1947	Neil
Stack's	10/2-4/1947	"Lee" (Eliasberg)
Numismatic Gallery	3/1-2/1948	"Memorable" (Bell)
Mehl	5/23/1950	Kern
Stack's	4/8-10/1954	Davis-Graves
Kosoff	4/27/1956	"Melish"
New Netherlands	11/24/1956	48th Sale (Gaskill)
New Netherlands	12/7-8/1960	55th Sale ("Cicero")
Kreisberg/Schulman	3/21/1962	"Golden I"
Stack's	10/12-13/1962	Wolfson I
RARCOA	4/26-28/1963	"Bell 2" (Shapiro)
Mayflower	5/18/1963	Gaylord
Stack's	10/2-5/1963	Walton
Stack's	5/6-8/1965	Pierce
Stack's	4/21-23/1966	Bolt
Stack's	10/27-28/1967	Jay
Stack's	10/25-26/1968	Miles I
Superior	10/1-4/1973	Gilhausen I
Stack's	10/24-27/1973	Scanlon
Pine Tree	9/18-21/1974	GENA
Paramount	2/14-15/1975	Davies-Niewoehner
Stack's	4/29-30/1975	
Pine Tree	6/25-26/1975	Breen II
Stack's	3/12-13/1976	Garrett
Pine Tree	6/19-20/1976	Breen III
Paramount	7/9-10/1976	Elrod
NASCA	12/1-2/1976	McNally

Bowers and Ruddy	10/6-8/1977	"Fairfield" (Arthur Lamborn)
Stack's	2/2-4/1978	Goshen
RARCOA	8/4-5/1978	Kaufman
Stack's	12/1/1978	Bareford I
Stack's	3/17/1979	Charlotte Mint Museum
Ivy	7/20-21/1979	Herrman
Stack's	2/1-2/1980	Dalton
(Various)	7/23-24/1981	Auction 81
Kreisberg	11/13-14/1981	"Windsor"
New England	1/7-9/1982	"Orchard Hill"
Stack's	5/13-15/1982	Metropolitan New York
(Various)	8/13-14/1982	Auction 82
Bowers and Ruddy	10/27-29/1982	Eliasberg
Stack's	10/27/1983	Coles
Mid-American	5/24-25/1985	Jasper L. Robertson
Stack's	5/2/1986	Greater New York Numismatic Convention

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